DARGAH QULI KHAN
Muraqqa'
-e-
Dehli
The Mughal Capital in Muhammad Shah's Time
Chander Shekhar
Shama Mitra Chenoy

Muraqqa'-e-Dehli is an extremely valuable work giving a contemporary account of the late Mughal Delhi culture. The book deals with categories of people, ranging from the royalty, the nobility, *Sufi* saints, poets, elite artists to common place singers, dancers and *bazaar* folks, in a masterly and professional manner. Other contemporary works have either ignored them or somelike *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani, Gulshan-i-Sadiq* and *Chahar Gulshan* have made mere passing references to them. Indeed no other work of this period does singly compare with the *Muraqqa'* in providing insights into the culture and everyday life of Delhiites of Muhammad Shah's time.

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MURAQQA'-E-DEHLI

Dargah Quli Khan

Muraqqa'-e-Dehli

THE MUGHAL CAPITAL IN MUHAMMAD SHAH'S TIME

Foreword
Professor S. Nurul Hasan

English Translation with an Introduction and Notes
Chander Shekhar **Shama Mitra Chenoy**

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FOREWORD

Muraqqa'-e-Dehli forms part of the personal diary of Dargah Quli Khan, a young and enterprising member of the entourage of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah I from the Deccan. Dargah Quli Khan stayed in Delhi for about three years (1739-41), making observations on the life and culture as well as on a number of prominent personalities of the city on the eve of Nadir Shah's invasion.

The *Muraqqa'* provides a fascinating glimpse of Delhi's lay out and geographical features as well as its cultural life. Incidental light is thrown on aspects of economic and political conditions of the city. Together with different classes of people, ranging from the saints, poets, members of the royalty and nobility to the common folk, Dargah Quli Khan mentions a number of places where people from all walks of life assembled like the *bazaars*, *sufi* shrines and hospices and musical and poetical soirees. Dargah Quli's is a fascinating first hand account of the life of Muhammad Shah's Delhi in a style which is not only frank and uninhibited but also provides the readers some rare views of the life and culture of the city during the period.

For the first time an English translation of the *Muraqqa'* has been attempted by Shama Mitra Chenoy and Chander Shekhar, which is as faithful a translation as was possible and enables the readers to sample the flavour of

early 18th century Delhi. Readers will find the explanatory notes and glossary useful and the maps well illustrate the morphology of the city. I consider this work to be a useful addition to the growing volume of research on the history of the early 18th century Northern India.

Raj Bhawan, Calcutta
September 3, 1988.

S. NURUL HASAN

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PREFACE

In Muraqqa'-e-Dehli, Dargah Quli Khan presents a colourful account of the life and culture of Delhi at a crucial phase of the long and chequered history of the city as the imperial capital of the Mughals. This phase has generally been characterized as one of decline, decadence and degeneration. In Dargah Quli's account, however, the cultural life in the city seems to be in its full-bloom, the people in general having been not much affected by the plight of the imperial court. We therefore thought that it would help us appreciate better the society and history of the eighteenth century Delhi, if Dargah Quli's account could be made available to a larger number of scholars and students of this period. The result is an English translation of the account in the following pages.

Those who have read the text would appreciate the difficulties we have encountered in the course of our work. We have tried to be as faithful as a translation of such material could possibly be. In the notes, based largely on the cotemporary works, our aim has been to provide a better and clearer context for a fuller comprehension of Dargah Quli's account. Our introduction to the translation analyses in brief the contents of the *Muraqqa'*, considering some of the modern writings on the history of the period. We hope that the glossary, maps and the illustrations of some of the places mentioned in the *Muraqqa'* would also be found useful.

Diacritical marks on non-English words have been avoided as these complicate the process of printing and

help little the non-specialists to pronounce the words correctly. In transliterating these words, we have followed F. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* However, the usage of diacritical sign marks is omitted. These words have been italicised and their plurals have been marked with the addition of the letter 's'. However, the Greek Spiritus asper (') and spiritus (') represent the letters *'Ain* and *Hamza* respectively. Between the Perso-Arabic combined words a hyphen (-) has been used. The Arabic compounds which are joined by the Arabic article *al* have been spelled according to the familar Indian pronunciation.

We acknowledge with gratitude the inspiration and encouragement received from Professor S. Nurul Hasan in taking up the work. His consistant and generous guidance enabled us to complete it. Our thanks are due to Dr. Muzaffar Alam, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University for his helpful and valuable criticism and suggestions. Whenever we approached him with any problem, he guided us inspite of his various engagements with his own research works. We recall with gratitude the interest which Dr. S. M. Y. Jaffery, Department of Persian, Zakir Husain College, Delhi, showed in our work.(Late) Prof.N.H. Ansari, Department of Persian, University of Delhi gave useful suggestions at the early stage of this work. We cherish the memory of his affection. It is sad that he is no more with us to see our humble effort in print. We must place on record our thanks to Dr.H.C. Verma, Department of History, Delhi University; Dr. M.A. Khan and Dr. S.H. Qasmi, Department of Persian, University of Delhi, Mr. Tasneem Ahmad, I.C.H.R. for their keen interest in this work. Thanks are also due to Mr. Gulshan Naqvi, Maulana Azad Library, I. C. C.R, New Delhi; Dr. A. Alim, National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi; Dr. A. R. Bedar, Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library, Patna; Shri Sher Singh, Central Reference

Library, University of Delhi and Mr. Ikram, Zakir Husain College Library for their co-operation during our visits to these libraries. We must express our gratitude to Dilip Mitra Chenoy for his help in obtaining the photographs and many useful suggestions, and Gobind Prasad for his valuable help and suggestions especially with regard to Hindustani Music. We should not fail to express our thanks to Bhagat Singh and Masroor Ahmad who prepared the typescripts.

Finally we must not omit to thank Mr. T.C. Arora and Mr. Sanjay Arora of Deputy Publications for their keen interest in our work and for all that they have done to publish it.

At the end, we must say that we hold ourselves solely responsible for the errors which may still have remained due to our inexperience. For these we crave our readers indulgence.

University of Delhi, Delhi
September, 1988

Chander Shekhar
Shama Mitra Chenoy

ABBREVIATIONS

AS	*Asar-us-Sanadid*
AuS	*Anwar-us-Sufiya*
GH	*Gulshan-i-Hind*
HIL	History of Iranian Literature
HMH	*Hindustan ke Musalman Hukmarano Ke 'Ahd Ke Tamadduni Jalve*
KA	*Khazana-e-Amira*
MD	*Muraqqa'-e-Dehli* : *Dr. N.H. Ansari*
MD(HYD)	*Muraqqa'-e-Dehli* : *Mirza Muzaffar Hussain (Hyderabad)*
ML	*Muntakhabul-Lubab*
MN	*Majmua'-e-Nughz*
MOD	Monuments of Delhi
MT	*Miftah-ut-Tawarikh*
MU	*Ma'asir-ul-Umara*
MuN	*Ma'arif-un-Naghmat*
PI	Prostitution in India
QH	*Qasas-i-Hind*
SA	*Siyar-ul-'Arifin*
Sada Rang	*Rampur Ki Sada Rang Parampara*
SARPIT	Some aspects of Religion and Politics in India During the 13th Century

SID	*Sair-i-Dehli*
SK	*Safina-e-Khushgo*
SM	*Sair-ul-Manazil*
SMO	*Siyar-ul-Muta'akhkhirin*
Taziyeh	Taziyeh : Ritual and Drama in Iran
WDHD	*Waqi'at-i-Dar-ul-Hukumat-e-Dehli*

Introduction

Muraqqa'-e-Dehli or an album of Delhi[1] originated in a personal diary, in which the author Dargah Quli Khan, an important official in the principality of Hyderabad, had penned his observations and comments on various aspects of life he witnessed at the time of his stay (1737-41) in Shahjahanabad. From these observations which present a fascinating picture of Delhi's social and cultural life in the 18th Century, the contemporary political and economic situations can be gleaned. What makes the reading particularly interesting is that it is a first hand account of a youthful yet keen observer, who owing to the nature of the work did not feel the need to couch his observations in more acceptable language or give it meanings that would be misleading. Had the *Muraqqa'* been a commissioned work or a work to please a patron it would have lost much of its exuberance and honesty.

The language used by the author in his diary is ornate Persian and on occasions steeped in hyperbole. He made profuse use of similes by virtue of which he is constantly making comparisons in his commentations. Added to these is the pungent flavour in the descriptions provided by him, with the aid of *Roz-marra* and *Muhawara*.

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1. Delhi in this album incorporates Shahjahanabad or the walled city as well as the old cities of *Dehli* like *Purana Qila* and Mehrauli and their suburbs.

Muraqqa'-e-Dehli was the title given for the first time in 1926 by Mirza Muzaffar Hussain who extracted and edited the relevant portions on *Dehli* from Dargah Quli Khan's diary and printed them in the form of a book from Hyderabad. Later an Urdu translation was attempted by Khwaja Hasan Nizami under the title of *'Purani Dehli Ke Halat'*. This translation was published from Aligarh. In 1981 (Late) Professor N.H. Ansari of the Department of Persian, University of Delhi, reedited the text prepared by Mirza Muzaffar Hussain. He retained the title, translated it into Urdu and published it along with the text and an introduction.

In this first attempt at an English translation of the *Muraqqa'*, it has been our constant endeavour to keep alive the spirit of the work by remaining true to the text. However, words and meanings do get altered when translated from one language to another and it is also difficult to retain the exact psyche and soul of the age in which the work was written. Barring these shortcomings we have tried to render the work as faithfully as possible.

Dargah Quli Khan's observations made just prior and after the invasion of Nadir Shah (1739 A.D.) form a paradox of Delhi's cultural and political life where extremes seem to have been incredibly juxtaposed. On the one hand was the record of joy and celebration prevailing amongst the people, unaware of the impending disaster, on the other hand, was the continuance of the same spirit even after the holocaust of the invasion. "The brilliance of Mughal culture stands out sharply against the background of political turmoil and the gloom and depression caused by it."[2] These juxtapositions appear to have crept in sub-

2. Z.U. Malik, *The Reign of Muhammad Shah (1719-1739)*, Bombay, 1977, p. 345.

consciously when the author gave his authentic first hand account. Some would even regard them as contradictions.

Dargah Quli Khan was facilitated in this task by his proximity to the royal court as well as the city populace. He was close to the royal court and its ways on the one hand, as he was a part of the entourage of *Nizam-ul-Mulk* Asaf Jah I, the autonomous Mughal Governor of the Deccan. The latter had come to Delhi, at the invitation of the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah (1720-1748 A.D.) to resolve the political matters in the capital. On the other hand, the author mixed freely with the people of Delhi and made it a point to visit all those places from where the Delhites derived spiritual solace and physical gratifications. He thus visited almost all the centres of cultural entertainment in the city and its suburbs.

The range of Dargah Quli Khan's observations is very wide. For a better understanding of the work it would be appropriate to divide the book into four sections. The theme of the first section is highly varying. He wrote of mausoleums of renowned *sufi* saints and the ceremonies of *urs* connected with them as well as the awe and reverenee they inspired amongst the people. He has also written of the famous market places of Delhi, Hindu and Muslim festivals and other occasions of joy and entertainment. The author has also given an account of some of the contemporary living *sufis*, their piety and asceticism, with incisive comments on their values and traditions which had come to determine their life patterns. Needless to say that in the process he provides an insight into the religious rituals and the social practices of the city.

The second section of the book commences with the author's account of the poets (pp. 58-65) who have left an indelible mark on the Indo-Persian and Urdu poetry.

Some of them were Dargah Quli Khan's contemporaries. His account, perhaps, could be of some help in appreciating the stages through which the poets search for a new medium passed. As we know, it was during this period that the medium of poetic composition changed rapidly from Persian and earlier forms of *Hindavi* to what came to be identified as *Urdu-e-Mualla.*

The third section of the book is devoted exclusively to the *Marsiya Khwans* (pp. 66-74) who recited elegies in praise of *Hazrat* Imam Ali and *Hazrat* Imam Hussain and other members of the latter's family, martyred at Kerbela, in Iraq.

The fourth and the final section of the book is about the *Arbab-e-Tarb* (pp. 75-125), a term used for people who entertained. This included a wide variety of people from amongst the musicians, dancers, their accompanyists and the mimics etc.

Dargah Quli Khan has not questioned the authenticity of places like *Qadam Sharif* (pp. 2-3) and *Qadamgah-e-Hazrat* Ali (pp. 4-5). He has given a simple and straight narrative of these places like any other believer. Such was the faith these places evoked that a visit to these shrines was considered to be the source of bliss. The life spent in these *dargahs,* collecting the holy water and charms, tying of threads on the screens and seeking the fulfillment of one's desires was most sought after. Besides people sought to be buried in the environs of these pious places with a belief that it would bring comforts in the life hereafter. However, the narrative gives an insight into the social and cultural activities of the people of *Dehli.* What were these activities? Attending the birthday celebrations of Prophet Muhammad on the twelfth day of *Rabi-ul-Awwal* (pp. 47-49), the ceremonies connected

with the martyrdom and mourning rituals for *Hazrat* Imam Hussain who died a noble death at Kerbela in the lunar month of *Muharram*, the *urs* ceremonies of renowned *sufi* saints like *Hazrat* Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki (pp. 5-8), *Hazrat* Nizam-ud-Din Aulia (pp. 9-10), *Hazrat* Nasir-ud-Din *Chiragh Dehli* (p. 11) and many others, including the famous poet *Mirza* Abdul Qadir Bedil (p. 16). The purpose of these ceremonies was to celebrate the birth or death anniversary of the person concerned. The nature and scope of these ceremonies incorporated manifold dimensions within them. People gathered at the *dargahs/ mazars*, recited the Holy Quran beside the pious graves, prayed for the peace of the departed souls and offered other prayers to attain benediction and bliss for themselves.

These ceremonies also provided occasions for people of different faiths and from all sections of the society to gather, mingle and interact with one another. The *mehfil-e-Qawwali* or *Sama* was one such occasion. The *sufis* and the others with sufic leanings attended the music ensembles at these shrines to achieve communion with the Ultimate Reality, while the laity listened to these sometimes only for the sake of personal enjoyment. The laity included people of all stratas, the difference being that those with wealth and influence could have their pick while the others had to be content with whatever was available to them. These activities incorporated within then the *mela* concept as well. As all these places were situated in the suburbs, far from the metropolis, people brought their beddings and tents along. Shopkeepers erected stalls alongwith the gamekeepers. All things which imparted worldly and other worldly joy, food, games, fun and frolic, singing and dancing, mimics and jocunds, convival gatherings along with an atmosphere of piety were available. The people of Delhi seemed to have evinced a keen interest in their heritage as well. After the revelries

were over they would visit the neighbouring gardens and monuments.

Of special interest as a place of worship and reverence, leisure and pleasure was Mehrauli. People who could walk the distance started their journey very early in the morning or late at night (from Shahjahanbad) so as to reach Mehrauli by dawn. Mehrauli was an institution in itself and evoked a gamut of emotions amongst the people who flocked there in large numbers. Amongst other things of interest the *Hauz-e-Shamsi* was there which "represented many facets of the Muslim culture of those days" (p. 7. F.N. 6 and 7). Opposite to the *Hauz-e-Shamsi* was the *birka*, a place where one felt oblivious of worldly affairs. So enamoured was the author by the prevailing atmosphere, that he compared it only with paradise which formed the ultimate in the human beings conception of the best. Besides, Mehrauli was the abode of such venerated *sufi* saint as *Hazrat Qutb-ud-Din* Bakhtiyar Kaki and many Mughal Emperors (Bahadur Shah I, 1707-1712, Farrukh Siyar, 1713-1719) who wished to be buried close to the grave of the saint. Thus, Mehrauli attracted everyone, the royalty, the commoners, the pious, the learned, the poets, philosophers, artists, prostitutes and pimps. What however remains unclear from Dargah Quli Khan's account is whether it was the general populace of *Dehli* which went to these places or just some groups visited them repeatedly. Did these places attract the same crowd over and over again or did different people venture to different places and centres ?

A study of the pilgrimage centres as depicted by the author also provides a fascinating picture of the moral fabric of the populace of *Dehli*. On the one hand we encounter people steeped in spiritualism at the *dargahs* of the *sufi* saints, where they thronged to worship and atone

for their sins, especially on the occasion of the ceremonies of *urs*. Side by side in the *melas* on these occasions, we also meet people who were there principally to indulge in revelries and all kinds of perversities. No section of society had a monopoly over one set of values. The extreme values were a general and a common phenomenon. The graves of *Khuld Manzil*[3] (Emperor Bahadur Shah I p. 17), Mir Musharraf (pp. 19-20), a noble of the times of Emperors Farrukh Siyar and Muhammad Shah and Nagal (p. 51) had become places where the annual *urs* occosions warranted such extreme licentiousness that even the Imperial upholder of morality was unable to suppress them. These places enticed women who came here bedecked in finery to attract the men who flocked there in large numbers with the purpose of having a good time.

A similar spirit of revelry underlined the theme for the celebration of the festival of *Basant* (pp. 42-44) and the *mehfils* organised by some of the members of the nobility, namely Azam Khan (pp. 38-39), Latif Khan (pp. 40-41) and Miran (pp. 45-46).

The festival of *Basant* was celebrated at *Qadam Sharif* and began with a spirit of piety and reverence. It however proceeded with the desire on the part of those present to seek maximum pleasure with the aid of wine, women and music. However, pleasure was not attained at the houses of the nobles mentioned above under the guise of piety. All those gathered were conscious of the part they had to perform. There were young lads and beautiful girls whose task it was to charm the members of the nobility present and seek to join their services while the latter were there

3. Similer details have been provided in Kamwar Khan's *Tazkirat-us-Salatin Chaghta*, Ed. Muzaffar Alam, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, pp. 156-158.

to make these novices an object of their pleasure. These temporary sources of pleasure and enjoyment found a permanent expression when Kusal Singh inhabited a locality namely Kusal *Pura* (p. 50) and populated it with dancers and *malzadis* and other such elements of society. Here one was not at the mercy of patronage of some wealthy person. People went there whenever they so desired. However, it has not been possible to find the location of this place in the city of Delhi.

The birthday of Prophet Muhammad (pp. 47-49) was celebrated great rejoicing in the *Arab Ke Sarai*.[4] With the presence of its inmates and the occasions of festivity this presently derelict place would have come alive with the music of the cantors and the recitation of the holy scripture. We also get a glimpse of their hospitality, and the picture of coffee with excessive sugar being piled on the visitors can well be imagined.

This section also provides a fantastic kaleidoscope of the two most important yet differing markets of the city of Delhi. One was the royal *bazaar* in *Chandni Chowk*, (pp. 24-25) of precious and unique things, gems, stones, perfumes, weapons and porcelain which found their way here from all parts of the world. Alongside were the *qahwa khanas* or coffee houses, institutions in themselves where the poets gathered to recite their verses. A stroll in this market was an enlivening experience, probably like a tour to the famous places of the world. However, renowned as it was for its *arts d' objects* it was a expensive market if the story given by the author is any indication. A lakh of rupees which a mother gave to her son to purchase a few essential items were spent within no time here. One can well imagine the standard of living of such people.

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4. Situated near Humayun's Tomb in Nizamuddin, New Delhi. Previously a suburb of Shahjahanabad i.e. *Dehli*.

Juxtaposed beautifully with this grand *bazaar* was the market streched from the Eastern Gate of the Grand Mosque (*Jama Masjid*) to the barbican of the Eastern Gate of the Royal Fort i.e. *Chowk* Sa'adullah (pp. 21-23). It was a haven of spurious goods of all kinds and an incredibly amusing place to be in if one can look at it from hindsight, and had not been the one to be at the receiving end.[5] The market was particularly famous for the varieties of medicines that were available for all kinds of hush-hush diseases and those which imparted virility to men. However, *Chowk Sa'adullah* was and remains a genuine market for the varieties of exotic birds available. Inspite of its notoriety this market held an attraction for those of gentle birth, not fiit to be seen in such places. However, they would pass by it or come on some pretext or the other.

Dargah Quli Khan mentions several contemporary living *sufi* saints. These saints, as we get the impression from his account, generally never attained the heights of piety, mysticism, and did not command veneration with the same fervour as did the shrines of the saints of yester-years. The existing *Khanqahs* did not evoke the same feelings of reverence, esteem and awe in the hearts of the people as their predecessors had done. Still, they seemed to have served the purpose of the people of our author's period admirably. *Khanqahs* of such prominent mystics as Shah Kamal (p. 35), Shah Ghulam Muhammad (p. 36), Mir Saiyid Muhammad (pp. Appendix A), Shah Rema-tullah (p. 37) and Majnun Nanak Shahi (pp. 31-32) were

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5. In spirit this market still exists. There are men seated of sheets of cloths with large jars which supposedly contain miraculous cures. On another side can be found street magicians holding the audience enthralled and as one walks down the present day *Meena Bazaar* there are handicapped people lying on the ground making music with their bellies or noses,

havens of such *sufis*. They, together with the contemporary poets and musicians held regular assemblies and contributed with their talents to occasion the state of *sama* for the benefit of all those present. Also some people sought spiritual and moral refuge from these mystics. They could help prevent disaster from befalling on the sinning populace by evoking their mystic and supernatural powers. Besides, some *Khanqahs* provided lodgings and boarding for the unemployed and the needy, as a result of the immediate distribution of charity and daily victuals. In fact those who adhered to this tradition retained the old element of sufism. Those who did not had digressed from the path. It is significant that some of them, according to our author, refused to accept financial assistance from the State, a fact which speaks highly in favour of these mystics. The Emperors and some other members of the royalty and the nobility tried to lure them into accepting *suyurghal* or other material aid, but to no success. These saints maintained a balanced relationship with both the rich and the poor. While talking of Shah Ghulam Muhammad Dawal Pura (p. 27), the author compares him with the *sufis* of the older generation. The author rarely bestows such an honour on his contemporaries.

With *Mirza* Mazhar Jan-e-Janan (pp. 53-54) begins the section dealing with the poets. "With the decline of sufism in Iran came a division, by virtue of which the metaphysical part of sufism attracted the philosophers and the poets adopted its terminology".[6] A similar situation seems to have prevailed in Delhi in the 18th century.

However, two outstanding personalities to come in the category of poet-philosophers and saints were *Mirza* Abdul

6. Compare K.A. Nizami, *State and Culture in Medieval India*, New Delhi, 1985, p. 207.

Qadir Bedil (died 1720 A.D.) and *Mirza* Mazhar Jan-e-Janan as well as a guest poet from Iran by the name of Saiyid Ali Hazeen (p. 56). *Mirza* Bedil chiefly contributed to the revival of sufism in the late 17th century. These poets rose above the genre of mere abstract philosophy and hollow poetry. They tried and were largely successful in philosophising their poetry and imparting a poetic style to their philosophy. This led not only to the revival of sufism but raised the standard of poetry and gave it a new depth. Many poets tried to follow the trend set by these distinguished personalities but few could hope to match it. Other prominent poets of the period with a sufic bent of mind were Arzoo (p. 57), Sabit (p. 58), Raqim (p. 59), Maftun (p. 60) and Varasta (p. 61). Sufism had a strong hold on members of the nobility as well. *Sufi* poets like Mani Yab Khan (p. 55), Raqim and Varasta adopted the sufic path, giving up their worldly possessions and positions to devote themselves to poetry.

The tradition of *Marsiya Khwani* (*marsiya recitation*) came to India from Iran, where it had reached its epoch under the Safvid rulers. The founder of the Safvid dynasty had built his sovereignty in Iran, amongst other things, on *Shiaism*. Hussain Waiz Kashifi and others are accounted as the renowned *Marsiya* writers of Safvid Iran. This tradition came to India alongwith the Persian nobles at the Mughal Court. A class of *Marsiya Khwans* also came to India in the period of Emperor Humayun after the latter returned from Persia and recovered the empire from the Surs. (1554-56 A.D.). They settled in India and earned patronage from the Iranian *Shia* nobles. Many Iranians and *Marsiya Khwans* had also settled in Golconda and Bijapur, the two major *Shia* Dynasties of the Decan in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Later, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Bhopal together with Delhi emerged as major centres for this class of *Marsiya Khwans*

to display their expertise in *Marsiya Khwani*, during the month of *Muharram* in particular. The mourning for the family of the Kerbela Martyrs began on the first day of the month of *Muharram* and lasted till the *Ashura* or the 10th day of the month. Dargah Quli Khan makes a special mention of some of the *Marsiya Khwans* probably because he himself was *Shia* and his ancestors hailed from Iran. He has studied their talents and status in society very minutely. Their talents were mainly two-fold. One lay in the composition of elegies and the other in the recitation of these elegies. The elegies were to be composed and rendered with an objective to create an atmosphere of extreme sorrow and to afflict the mourners gathered to wallow in grief. Dargah Quli Khan has written about some of the more famous and popular *Marsiya Khwans* (pp. 66-74) living during that period. Also, within their names there seems to be a heirarchy of sorts, for some wished to copy the others. Those who composed and sang the elegies were emulated by those who just recited.

The demand for the *Marsiya Khwans* in society fluctuated through the year. During *Muharram* they were in great demand, each noble vying with the other to enlist their services. Consequently, this was the principal month for their income. Otherwise, they seemed to have generally lived frugally (out of necessity). Besides, professionally also they were regarded as '*Razil*' i.e. of low class. In fact, their status was on par with that of petty traders and they did not enjoy respect in society even if they may have been well off. The poets and *Marsiya Khwans* were not well off. The distinction of low class and higher class was based upon the profession. The term of *Sharif* and *Razil* indicated the profession primarily. The petty traders and lower poets, irrespective of their wealth were regarded as *Razil*. In contrast a minor *mansabdar* drawing a salary of rupees ten enjoyed a higher status in society, even

though in actuality he was solely dependent on his *mahajan.*[7]

Dargah Quli Khan provides a human touch when he dwells on the physical attributes and the nature of the voices of the *Marsiya Khwans.* They were either endowed with powerful and booming voices which, coupled with the verses of the elegies reduced the mourners to tears, while the others with the sheer pathos in their voices plunged the mourners into grief.

Another fact which comes to light (ref. Jani Hajjam, p. 73) is that even if these people managed to accummulate wealth they were unable to retain it because of the force of their squandering habits. Hence, they were more often than not compelled to live a life of penury. Still, as long as they remained in favour of some wealthy patron, they could lead a life of comparative ease.

One lacuna in this section is the absence of reference to any *Ashur Khana.* Given the fact that the *Shias* were in a minority in Delhi, the *Ashur Khanas* may have been concentrated in a few specific places. On this subject, however, Dargah Quli Khan has provided us with little to even conjecture.

Dargah Quli Khan has written about a number of musicians and other artists. He begins with the stately and much revered and honoured Ne'mat Khan, (pp. 75-77)

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7. For some details about the position of the *Mahajan* in Delhi at this time see Muzaffar Alam, *The Crises of Empire in Mughal North India,* Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1986, Chap. I See also C.A. Bayly *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaar;* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983, for a comprehensive discussion on traders and money lenders and their strength *visa-a-vis* the nobility in Delhi and in the regional centres in the 18th Century.

master of all contemporary musicians. He was known as *Sada Rang* which literally meant ever colourful or ever green. He was a master *bin* player but his skills extended to playing other instruments and composing and innovating *raags* as well. His musical assemblies were popular and well attended.

Besides, there were other instrumentalists like Baqir Tamburchi (*tambura* player, p. 79), Hasan Khan Rebabi (*rebab* player, p. 80) and many others. Our author had an exceptional knowledge of music. His comments and criticism of the contemporary musical scenario are thus very incisive.

Dargah Quli Khan writes of the *qawwals* and *qawwali*, a popular form of music in Delhi during his period. The first *qawwal* mentioned by the author was Taj Khan (p. 78), whose voice evoked in him the memory of the paintings of the legendary artist of Iran, Behzad. There were others, adept in the singing of *Khayal* and *Kabbit*, who aroused a similar response in the hearts of the people who attended their *mehfils*. Forming the cotorie of artists was Taqi (p. 96), the leader of the conjurors, who, according to the author, had access to the private apartments of the Emperor. Obviously, he must have been a person of power and connections. It was probably this which attracted beautiful women, handsome lads and others to him in the hope of making a living. Then, there were the *naqqals* or mimics, earning their livelihood almost independently and also employed by the Imperial Court. The *naqqals* were from both the sexes.

A very attractive personality to entertain the populace of *Dehli* was Mian Hinga (p. 114). Although only a man to entertain anyone and everyone, he could excite the jealousy of the most coveted courtesan when it came to

relieving people of the money in their pockets. Also, his physical appearance and mode of dress were unusual. He evoked such sentiments from those who beheld him that they were 'unpretentious in their admiration of this unique phenomenon created by God'.

Of the nineteen prominent women artists Dargah Quli Khan writes about, some had reached "the winter of their youth", but their value then lay in their beautiful voices. They could no longer dance or attract paramours for the night. However they retained their esteem and the people continued to shower adulations on them and sought their company. The people they now attracted were those who were genuinely fond of music and cared for art, even if it was shorn of its fanciful trappings. To this category belonged Asa Pura (p. 104), Chak Mak Dahni (p. 115) Ramzani (p. 119) etc.

A trait common to all the dancing women noted by the author was that besides being good singers, they were conscious of the etiquette (*adab*) practised in *mehfils*. They were well mannered and cultured, eloquent and full of ready wit, well versed in the subtleties of language, discreet and able to provide pleasant company. Some were proud of their accomplishments and demanded a lot of adulation, admiration and money before one could earn any favours from them. They were, however, generally pliable like Zeenat (p. 117).

Our author seems to have derived special delight in mentioning Ad *Begum* (p. 107) and Sultana (p. 112), a twelve year old catamite. Ad *Begum* found a novel way of covering her legs, which generated excitement and interest amongst the people. She decorated them with *naqqashi* in place of wearing trousers. This she did in an age which though can be called promiscuous was neverthe-less quite rigid in matters of dress for women. Sultana, at

that tender age was adept at enthralling an audience used as it was to sophisticated and mature entertainers.

The dancing women mentioned in the book were young, beautiful and extremely talented, universally acclaimed and coveted. However, only the rich could afford to patronise them. The dancers on their part were also choosy about their patrons and acquiscented the company of the seekers only after substantial gifts had been bestowed on them. They had been the cause for many a home to ruin. They maintained a very high standard of living and their bearing rendered them unapproachable for most of the people. Some of these, like Nur Bai (pp. 110-111), Kamal Bai (p. 122), Chak Mak Dahni etc. were associated directly with the Royal Court. But their fortunes like many of their fellow artists declined after the invasion of Nadir Shah.

Going by Dargah Quli Khan's observations "music seems to have been the most popular and pervasive form of entertainment practised in all walks of life. It was patronised in the Imperial Court, in the establishments of the nobility, in the *Khanqahs* of the living *sufis*, in the houses of the musicians and dancers and on the streets and common places. Its votaries included Hindus and Muslims, *sufis*, saints, *sultans*, rich and poor, infact, men and women from different backgrounds and social situations. Music therefore functioned not only as an esoteric art, or a source of entertainment, but also a powerful instrument of cultural integration and social harmony.[8]

During the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir musicians were well honoured and respected. The poorest could

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8. Najma Perveen Ahmad, *Hindustani Music*, Manohar Publishers, Delhi, 1984, Introduction and Historical Background.

rise on the basis of his talent and skill. "Nobles vied with each other to secure the services of renowned musicians which helped better their socio-economic status. Hence music became a coveted, respected and renumerative profession."[9]

No wonder then there was a gradual profusion of musicians. "The sudden rise in their number" [from the regin of Jahandar Shah, 1712-13 A. D., when musicians were appointed to high government posts as well] "smacked of opportunism and a mercenary attitude amongst some of them. To please the patrons in the hope of reward, not so much the fulfilment of the creative urge, had become the object of performance, and the orientation of the musicians had moved from spiritual aspects and the development of the art of music for its own sake to increasing entertainment and pleasare.[10]

It was during the stay of Dargah Quli Khan in Delhi that the invasion of Nadir Shah and its accompanying horrors took place. His work shows us that this barbaric invasion had dampened the spirits of the Emperor and a few members of the nobility. However, the remarkable reselience of the people of Delhi and their innate fondness for music enabled them to revive their spirits and joie de vivre. In this section, our author comes out with many a dimension of the lines between the Imperial Court and the people of the city. He talks of some musicians and dancers, namely, Ne'mat Khan, Bole Khan Kalawant (p. 91), Taqi (p. 96), Chamani (p. 108) and other artists, who had performed exclusively for the Emperor and his household, have, since the invasion of Nadir Shah, started performing

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9. See, Najma Perveen Ahmad, *Hindustani Music,*
10. *Ibid.*

elsewhere. About a famous dancing girl, Kamal Bai, his observation issignificant. He says that "since the invasion of Nadir Shah, His Majesty *Din Panah* abstains himself from the musical soirees and has suspended them at the court. Consequently her company which had previously been forbidden to the people is now accessible." (p. 122). The author made a similar comment when writing of Panna and Tanu (pp. 124-125).

Thus, inspite of the political turmoil and the decline at the Royal Court, the musical assemblies seem to have continued to be held with fervour in the city. If patronage was denied from one quarter, it was sought and given in another. The musicians were also in the process of making positive and creative contributions towards both instrumental and vocal music. New forms were being innovated, modified, improvised and combined as also various changes were being introduced in the basic forms of music and the creation of new styles. These compositions and innovations were highly valued and admired at that time. Several books on music, like *Raag Darpan*, *Qanun-e-Mausiqi* and *Ma'arif-un-Naghmat* etc. were written.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the musicians were classified into two categories, the *Kalawants* and the *Qawwals*. There was a predominence of *Kalawants* who sang in the *Dhruvapad* style in the seventeenth century, e.g. Bole Khan *Kalawant*. Our author terms this style as antiquated in the context of the eighteenth century. Singers of *Qawwali*, *Khayal*, *Kabbit*, *Tarana* and *Jangla* became more popular in the eighteenth century and a number of women musicians, Bari Naqqal (p. 99), Asa Pura (p. 104), Chamani (p. 108), Nur Bai (pp. 110-111) etc. also came to the forefront.

It has been rightly observed that "the fluctuations in the fortunes of the Mughal Empire were not reflected in the same proportion in the domain of art and culture. During the period of its decline, architecture, painting and literature suffered only marginally in quality and excellence while music seemed to have retained its vigour and vitality and continued to enjoy popularity and patronage."[11]

This has been explained in terms of cultural floresence even in the face of economic decay. "This proves the contention that cultural floresence is not necessarily and exclusively dependent on material prosperity. It can transcend adversity and flourish in times of political instability and economic distress."[12]

Such explanation was first given by Hermann Goetz[13] in his invaluable, though brief study of Indian art and culture in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

A study of *Muraqqa'-e-Dehli* clearly bears out the fact of cultural floresence during this phase of the eighteenth century. Its explanation however needs reconsideration. When we contrast cultural excellence with material decline we have in mind the affluence and impoverishment of only a section of the erstwhile royalty and aristocracy. But it is interesting to note that although the prospects of the artists at the Imperial Court were drying up they continued to receive patronage from some rich members of the ruling class and more importantly, presumably from a large number of the middling classes. The priorities of

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11. Najma Perveen Ahmad, *Hindustani Music.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. Herman Goetz, *The Crises of Indian Civilization in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries.* Calcutta University series, Chowkhamba Sanskrit series, reprint, 1938.

the nobles had come to such a pass that they employed artists, kept them and looked after them, (I'timad-ud-Daulah's gift of brassware worth seventy thousand rupees to Behnai *Feel Sawar*, p. 106) but gave no salary to the soldiers. The economic status of prominent artists was on the rise.

مستی پہ پان چبا سرخرو کھاتے ھین
کبھی ستار ، کبھی ڈھولکی بجاتے ھیں
غرور غفلت جوبن میں مست ھیں سرشار

With betel in their mouths and bodies beautifully adorned,
the artists play the *dholak* or the *sitar*,
and are coquettish and cockish in the security of their affluence[14].

The *Muraqqa*' tells us that they could afford to hold musical gatherings at their own residences at regular intervals. Besides other people, members of the nobility vied with each other to gain admittance to them.

The demand for good artists and entertainers seldom wavered. The choice of entertainment of the entire population of Delhi bordered around amusements which could to a large extent be provided only by these artists. They were therefore, constantly in vogue.

We submit that the concept of general material decline in society should be reconsidered amongst other things in the light of the details provided in the *Muraqqa*'. It is clear from Dargah Quli Khan's work that cultural efflore-sence in Delhi, accompanied as in any other circumstances

14. Abdul Haq (Ed.), *Intikhab-e-Hatim*, Delhi University, Delhi, 1977, p. 206.

on the prosperity of one or the other. Also the description of Chandni *Chowk*, the *bazaar* of varieties of unique and expensive objects proves that there existed a market for such goods. This was all inspite of the decline of the Mughal Empire. However, the structure of cultural excellence could not have rested on the shoulders of a few prosperous nobles alone.[15] Thus the word decline or distress seems to have had a different connotation. Delhi and for that matter the northern Indian society, as some recent studies[16] have shown, did not experience absolute decay or decline. The forces which led to the drying up of material fortunes of one section seem to have implied prosperity for the others. The period thus seems to be one of shifts and transitions. This trend was not confined to Delhi and Northern India but extended to other parts of the country as well.[17]

These shifts and changes come out vividly from the writings of some contemporary men of letters, particularly those who either belonged to the erstwhile aristocratic class or had enjoyed patronage from them. Notable in this connection are some satirical compositions of Zatalli (d. 1713), Shakir Naji (d. 1754), Hatim (1699-1781),

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15. Their income was not dependent on the court nor generated because of it. It was probably the result of some form of private investment. See, R.E. Frykenberg (ed.), *Delhi through the ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1986, for Satish Chandra, Cultural and Political Role of Delhi, 1675-1725.
16. See, C.A.Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, Muzaffar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India*, R.B. Barnett, *North India Between Empires, Awadh, the Mughals and the British, 1720-1801*, Berkeley, 1980.
17. Compare, Andre Wink, *Land and Sovereignty in India ; Agrarian Society and Politics under the Eighteenth Century Maratha Svarajya*, Cambridge, 1986.

Yaqin, Fughan (d. 1772), Sauda (1713-1780). A number of *Shahr Ashobs*[18] or satirical poems of these poets depict the grave conditions of the nobility and the rise of the 'upstarts' from amongst the middling classes, referred to as *Razils* by Hatim and others.

جن کے ہاتھی تھے سواری کو سو اب ننگے پاؤں
پھرتے ہیں جوتی کے محتاج پڑے سرگرداں
جن کے پوشاک سے معمور تھے توشک خانے
سو وہ پیوند کو پھرتے ہیں ترستے عریاں
پرچۂ نان کو رکھ ہاتھ میں کھاتے ہیں امیر
جن کو دیکھوں ہوں سو ہیں فکر میں غلطاں پیچاں

وہ جو ٹھڈے کو ترستے تھے سواس دور میں آج
ہوئے ہیں صاحب مال و محل و فیل و نشان
رتبہ شیروں کا ہوا ہے گا شغالوں کو نصیب
جائے بلبل ہیں چمن بیچ غزلخوان زاغان
اے خدا خوب کہا ہے یہ کسی نے مصرع
یعنی نعمتیں بہ سگاں بخشی و دولت بہ خران

18. *Shahr Ashob*, a satirical poem, is a form of Persian and Urdu poetics. These satires depict the socio-political and moral decay of the natives of a particular city. They usually express anger and resentment of the poet at the decline of the city under the stress of adverse circumstances.

Those who once rode elephants now go bare-footed,

And for want of a pair of shoes wander about disconsolately.

Those whose wardrobes were packed with costly clothes,

Go about naked, unable to lay hands on rags.

Noblemen eat a piece of bread, holding it in the hand;
And all you see are lost in perplexities and worries.[19]

Those who yearned for parched grains once,

Are today owners of property, places, and elephants as marks of rank.

The jackals have usurped thc place of lions,

And in the garden crows are cawing in place of the song of the nightingale.

How well some one has written the hemistich ;

You have bestowed riches on dogs and affluence on donkeys.[20]

An important aspect which comes to mind is the industries which must have flourished to cater to the demands of the people the author writes about. The profusion of dancing girls, musicians and other artists, with their requirements of instruments, finery, chandeliers, carpets, tents and other such things to provide for this

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19. and 20. The essence of the prevalent conditions are aptly reflected in Hatim's work, and are true of the entire 17th and 18th centuries. Hatim's verses are from Muhammad Sadiq's, *History of Urdu Literature*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1984 pp. 104-105.

never ending spectacle of joy and celebrations. The people (middle classes) who catered to these demands were consequently prospering more than those (members of the nobility) whose resources were dwindling, but had to keep erect the edifice of their dodering pomp and glory.

Muraqqa'-e-Dehli is an extremely valuable work giving a contemporary account of the late Mughal Delhi culture. The book deals with categories of people, ranging from the royalty, the nobility, *sufi* saints, poets, elite artists to common place singers, dancers and *bazaar* folks, in a masterly and professional manner. Other contemporary works have either ignored them or some like *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani*, *Gulshan-i-Sadiq* and *Chahar Gulshan*[22] have made mere passing references to them. Indeed no other work of this period does singly compare with the *Muraqqa'* in providing insights into the culture and every-day life of Delhiites of Muhammad Shah's time.

The contents of Dargah Quli Khan's diary reveal his grasp over the gradually changing cultural scenario of Delhi. Mysticism for instance had been reduced practically into mere grave worship and superstition even if it had an appeal for all sections of society and for people from all walks of life. Sometimes it was difficult to distinguish it from escapism. [23]

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22. For further details see, Select Bibliographies, C. A. Storey, *A Bio-Biographical Survey*, Luzac and Co., Ltd., London, 1970, Vol. I-Part I, Kamwar Khan, *Tazkirat-us-Salatin Chaghta*, K. A. Nizami, *Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht*, Idarah-Adabiyat-i-Dehli, Delhi, 1984 (Urdu) and Muzaffar Alam *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India*.

23. For an analysis of contemporary society see, S. A. A. Rizvi, *Shah Wali-Allah and His Times, A Study of Eighteenth Century Islam, Politics and Society in India*, Ma'rifat Publishing House, Canberra, Australia, 1980; A. D. Muztar, *Shah Wali-Allah, A*

In the realm of poetry and music his own familiarity and understanding of these mediums enabled the author to give a knowledgeable account of the prevailing poetic skills and styles. To this he added his personal critical appreciations and at times made satirical observations. The author also took cognisance of the change taking place in the medium of expression both with the poets and the people. He mentions poets who wrote in Persian but at the same time started to compose in *Rekhta* (Urdu)[24]. *Rekhta* held greater appeal for people of different walks and was probably better understood.

He was also at ease when writing of both instrumental and vocal music. Some of the popular instruments he mentioned were the *rebab*, *sarangi*, *bin*, *tambura*, *dholak*, and the *pakhawaj*. He wrote of an instrument invented by a blind musician Shah Nawaz, on which the sounds of the *dholak*, *pakhawaj* and the *tambura* could be produced. He also referred to instruments like *moor chang* and *mandal* which are no longer in use in our time. The author was familiar with the fundamentals of music like notations, *gat*, *tal*, *raags*, etc. and in vocal music, with the styles of *Kabbit*, *Khayal*, *Jangla*, *Tarana* and *Dhruvapad.*[25]

Saint Scholar of Muslim India, National Commission on cultural and Historical Research, Islamabad, 1979, and Muhammad Umar, 'Glimpses of a Dying Culture from a personal Diary, *Journal of Indian History*, Aug. 1965, Vol. XLIII, Part II, Serial No. 128.

24. For further details, Jamil Jalibi, *Tarikh-i-Adab-i-Urdu*, Educational Publishing House, Delhi, 1984 (Urdu), Vol. II, Ist Part and Muhammad Sadiq, *History of Urdu Literature.*

25. For further details, see, Najma Perveen Ahmad, *Hindustani Music*, and Saryu Kalekar, *Rampur Ki Sada Rang Parampara,* Brahspati Publications, New Delhi, 1984 (Hindi).

Dargah Quli Khan has given a critical assessment of the dancing and singing girls as well. He was able to distinguish between those who were more proficient in either dancing or singing, or charmed people by their ready wit and poetic talent. He could even decipher the approximate age of these girls by studying the kind of people who frequented their assemblies. One meeting with Nur Bai, the famous courtesan of Delhi enabled him to perceive that her beauty was superior to her talent. The author also writes of young winsome lads and how susceptible people were to them. The roughly hewn innocents had to be cut and polished by experts like Azam Khan before their true worth could be established.

Dargah Quli Khan had an unpretentious, yet ornate style of writing, probably because he was young and writing for a private collection. Therefore, he sought not to mince words. However he could not escape the tentacles of writing florid prose, imbued as he was in the court culture and etiquette which dictated such a style, called *Sabk-e-Hindi*[26] by the stylists. Since he was himself a poet his prose is full of rhythm. On many instances he quotes the verses of famous Persian poets as well as his own to provide an understanding of the context. We also come across pages interspersed with peppery wit. When writing of the Salat Khani *faqir* (p.28) and his turban, he wished God would grant him lightness! In his description of the market at *Chowk* Sa'adullah he christened the pretentious medicines sold there (to impart virility and sensuality to the users) as muck (p. 22). At another place (P. 82) he wrote a hemistch, "Lord! rememberance of those days when entertainment was free". We do not know in which

26. Amongst the salient features of *Sabk-e-Hindi* were ambiguity and ornamentation, Jan Rypka, The Safavid, Indian Style, in Karl Jahn (ed.), *History of Iranian Literature*, Holland, 1956, pp. 291-301.

context this reference was made, but it seems more like a prophesy of the heavy tax on entertainment these days.

Most of the modern scholars[27] have concentrated only on one aspect of the details available in the *Muraqqa*', namely, the moral degeneration in the 18th century society. There are however other facets of history which we can glean from the author's covert and overt statements. Thus a study of the period, as far as it is possible without any preconceived biases and an understanding of the social and cultural, political and economic situations and paradoxes is more important than just passing value judgement on the society under study. For such an attempt Dargah Quli Khan's account could prove to be of substantial help.

27. Departing from this tradition, Professor S. Nurul Hasan has made use of Dargah Quli Khan's observations to reconstruct the morphology of the city of Shahjahanabad. For details see, S. Nurul Hasan, 'The Morphology of the Medieval Indian City, A Case Study of Shahjahanabad in the 18th and Early 19th Century, Occasional Paper Series : 4, Urban History Association of India, Amritsar, 1982.

A Note on the Author

Dargah Quli Khan[1] was an important official who held responsible positions in the autonomous principality of Hyderabad. His antecedents can be traced to Iran. His great grandfather, Khandan Quli Khan was an associate of Ali Mardan Khan, governor of Qandhar, appointed by Shah Abbas I (1587-1629) of Iran. During the reign of Shah Safi (1629-42), Ali Mardan Khan left the services of the Persian *Shah* and came to India, accompanied by Khandan Quli Khan. He joined the court of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (1628-59) and in 1048 A.H./1638 A.D., was appointed the governor of Kashmir. After Ali Mardan Khan's death, Khandan Quli Khan was given the *jagir* in Thatta. On his demise, Emperor Aurangzeb (1659-1707) conferred a *mansab* on his son Dargah Quli Khan who accompanied the Emperor to the Deccan. Dargah Quli Khan was succeeded by his son Nauroz Quli Khan, who was made the *qiladar* of Dharwar. Later his son Khandan Quli Khan II was given the *mansab* of Aurangabad and Emperor Bahadur Shah I (1707-12) appointed him *waqa'-i-Nigar* (diary writer) as well as the *faujdar* of Sangam Nayyar.

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1. To prepare this life sketch we have used the information available in the following. C.A. Storey, *A Bio-Biographical Survey*, Luzac and Co., Ltd., London, 1953, Vol. I, Part 2, Muzaffar Hussain, *Muraqqa'-e-Dehli*, Hyderabad, 1926, (Persian), N.H. Ansari, *Muraqqa'-e-Dehli*, Delhi, 1982, (Urdu), Muhammad Ibrahim Bestami Parizi, *Ganj Ali Khan*, (a biography in persian of the father of Ali Mardan Khan who arrived from Qandhar at the court of Shahjahan accompanied amongst others by the great grandfather of our author. This book contains information about the lives of the descendents of Ali Mardan Khan and his companions as well.) Tehran, 1945.

DARGAH QULI KHAN

Khandan Quli Khan II was the first person of this family to be given the responsibility of construction and habitation of the area around Aurangabad by *Nizam-ul-Mulk* Asaf Jah I during his first viceroyalty of the Deccan[2]. Our author Dargah Quli Khan was Khandan Quli Khan's son and he was born on 29th *Rajab* 1122 A.H./12th September, 1719 A.D. at Sangam Nayyar.

From his childhood days Dargah Quli Khan had a keen and a sharp mind. Although he was looked after by his father, his education was supervised by *Nizam-ul-Mulk* himself. Consequently he acquired sound knowledge in the field of traditional learning as well as in fine arts. While still a teenager, he became quite famous amongst his contemporaries. When Dargah Quli Khan was sixteen years old his aptitude and faithfulness led Asaf Jah to bestow on him (Dargah Quli Khan) his paternal *jagir* with a commensurate *mansab*. At the age of twenty he was honoured by being included in *Nizam-ul-Mulk*'s suite.

Journey to Delhi

Our author visited Delhi during 1737-41 A.D., in the company of his patron *Nizam-ul-Mulk* Asaf Jah I. By this time much of the power and grandeur of the descendents of Timur had declined.[3] The court of the reigning Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah (1720-48) was in more than one sense, a centre of mere revelry and fun. The emperor was content in spending his time

2. For *Nizam-ul-Mulk's* life and politics see, Yusuf Husain, *The First Nizam, Life and Times of Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah I*, second ed., Bombay, 1963.
3. For some details of the events leading to decline, see, W. Irvine, *Later Moghuls*, reprint, Delhi, 1971.

in the compay of women and wine, leaving the task of the administration of the empire in the hands of unscrupulous officers. The court was torn with factional rivalry.[4] *Nizam-ul-Mulk* had been independently looking after the affairs of the Deccan for quite sometime. The revolts of the Marathas were on the rise and he was trying to supress them. To curb the rising menace of the Maratha power the Emperor strengthened the position of *Nizam-ul-Mulk* by bringing under his jurisdiction the *subas* of Gujrat and Malwa as well. The Emperor also summoned him to the court at Delhi, possibly to meet the imminent threat of Persian invasion. Before departing for Delhi, *Nizam-ul-Mulk* honoured Dargah Quli Khan with the office of *Darogah-i-Harkara*.

Nizam-ul-Mulk reached Delhi in the month of *Rabi-'ul-Awwal* 1150 A.H./June 1727 A.D. After paying his respects at the Imperial court he started the preperations to crush the Marathas. However, before he could succeed in this task, Delhi was face to face with the threat of Nadir Shah's invasion. *Nizam-ul-Mulk* hastily made peace with the Marathas and retreated to the court. Nadir Shah came with his army (1739) and encamped at Karnal, one hundred miles from Delhi. Enroute he had looted many places in the Mughal provinces of Kabul and Lahore. The Mughals met with a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Persians at Karnal. Delhi was at the mercy of the invaders.

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4. For an analysis of court politics and factional struggle, see, Z.U. Malik, *The Reign of Muhammad Shah*, Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740*, Third ed., Delhi, 1982, and Muzaffar Alam, *The Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India.* Alam also discusses the processes of the emergence and configuration of local and regional powers.

After the defeat of Emperor Muhammad Shah, *Nizam-ul-Mulk* was sent to meet Nadir Shah and he was accom panied by Dargah Quli Khan. Also, when an enmasse massacre was ordered by Nadir Shah in the wake of the rumours of his death, *Nizam-ul-Mulk* was sent once again to him to apologise and plead mercy, Dargah Quli Khan went with him.

Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah returned to the Deccan in 1154 A.H./1741 A.D. He was succeeded by his son *Nawwab* Nizam-ud-Daulah Nasir Jung Shahid (*Nizam-ul-Mulk* II). It is said that he conferred the title of *Awali Panah* on Dargah Quli Khan. In the second year of his viceroyalty, our author was given the charge of the *Kotwali* of Khajasta Buniyad (Aurangabad) and along with an army of 100 *sawar*, was given the task of collecting the revenue from Dharwar district.

In 1164 A.H./1750 A.D. *Nawwab Amir-ul-Mumalik* Salabat Jung succeeded Nasir Jung. It put an end to the civil war but the tension between the English and the French increased.[5] On the other hand the Marathas struck again. Dargah Quli Khan was made the *Daroga-e-Feel Khana* (incharge of Elephant House) and in 1167 A.H./1753 A.D. he was given a flag, and his *mansab* was revised to the rank of *Shash Hazari* (6000/6000) with the title of *Mu'taman-ud-Daulah*. After some time he obtained the governorship of Aurangabad.

It was during this time that Madho Rao had succeeded his father Balaji Rao in Pune. However the defacto power was in the hands of Raghunath Rao, who collected

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5. For some details of the politics of this period, see, J.N. Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Calcutta 1932-50, reprint, Bombay, 1971-5, Volumes I and II.

an army and marched to Aurangabad. He was defeated by Dargah Quli Khan.

In the same year i.e. 1175 A.H./1762 A.D. on 14th *Zul-Hijj*/6th July *Nawwab* Salabat Jung was dislodged by *Nawwab* Nizam Ali Khan Asaf Jah II. The *mansab* of Dargah Quli Khan was raised to the rank of *Haft Hazari* (7000/7000). He was also granted the permission to ride an elephant. He performed his duties with aplomb and consequently was conferred the title of *Khan-e-Dauran*.

However, Dargah Quli Khan was dismissed from the governorship of Aurangabad in 1179 A.H./1765 A.D. and he returned to his *jagir* at Nizamabad. While efforts to reinstate him was still underway he fell ill and died of cancer in 18th *Jammadi-ul-Awwal* 1180 A.H./Oct.1766 A.D. He was buried in Aurangabad.

Muraqqa'-e-Dehli

When *Nawwab* Dargah Quli Khan Bahadur Salar Jung Mu'taman-ud-Daulah visited *Jahanabad*[1] in the company of *Nawwab Nizam-ul-Mulk* Asaf Jah, he noted all the peculiarities he observed there. These are being mentioned here as they are full of interest.

1. *Dehli.*

Qadam Sharif[1]

Grandeur on *Dehli* has been bestowed by the benevolent presence of the *Qadam Sharif* of the Holy Prophet [Muhammad]. For men of discernment and vision the dust of His threshold is a wealth of inspiration. The sinners and the needy prostrate before it [*Qadam Sharif*] to atone for their sins and have their wishes fulfilled. It is imperative for everyone to respect the *paigah* of this *bargah* and people are always there offering obeisance and salutations.

Couplet :—

"The men of sight will forever prostrate before the earth on which the signs of your feet are found."[2]

Every Thursday, the courtyard of the *Dargah* is replete with visitors and it is difficult to approach the place of circumambulation and touch it. In the month of *Rabi'ul-Awwal* such crowds may be seen day and night.

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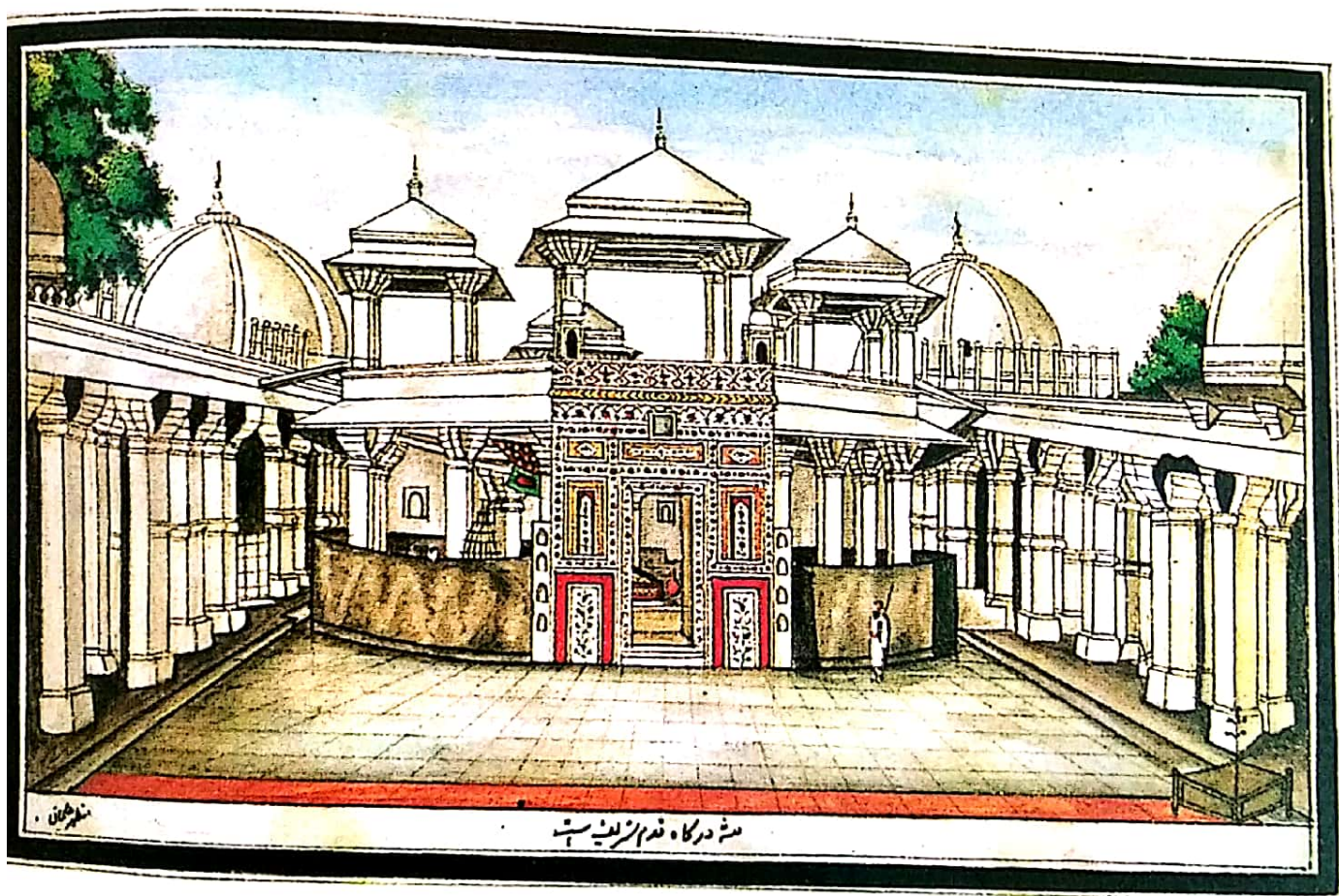
1. Lit. the holy foot [print] of the Prophet, brought by Makhdum Jahanian Jahan Gasht (707-85 A.H./1308-1383 A.D.) in the period of *Sultan* Firoz Shah Tughlaq after he had performed the sacred *Haj*. A few days later Fath Khan, the eldest son of the *Sultan* passed away and this foot print was installed on his grave. MT, p. 98. Dr. S.H. Qasmi in SM, p. 152, says that no contemporary work of Firoz Shah Tughlaq reveals such a thing. Hence its authenticity still remains doubtful as the Prophet had left no such sign. However, the believers come here regularly on the eve of 12th *Rabi'ul-Awwal*, the date of birth of the Prophet. See *Makhdum Jahanian-Jahan Gasht*, p. 229. This foot print is located in *Qila Qadam Sharif*, near Nabi Karim Police Station, Qutb Road.
2. Verse of Hafiz, a renowned *ghazal* laureate of Persia, 727-791 A.H./1329-1389 A.D.

QADAM SHARIF

Pilgrims and ascetics come from countries and cities of far and near for pilgrimage and seek the fulfillment of their desires. Some of the people wet their desirous lips with the *sherbat* and drink it [water provided for the ablutions of the *Qadam Sharif*], while others take it with them for those living far away. For recompensation in the other world, wealthy people purchase land at high cost in the surroundings of the *Dargah* for their [permanent] resting place. Consequently, there are many graves around it [*Dargah*] and also innumerable ones of the poor. The abundance of groups [of people] on the occasion of the *Urs* covers the floors and walls of this place and there is no room to sit. Thus, people try to reach it from morning by surpassing the others. All the eatables [collected] are distributed amongst the inmates, the poor and the needy and for many days it is a store [of food]. *Subhan Allah*[3], what a blessed place of bounty and miracles [it is] and in the *peshgah* of the door there is a *hauz*, the sweet water of which quenches the thirst of the thirsty to their hearts content. According to the will of a *Badshah*[4] of the old times who lies buried here, the slab of stone containing the miraculous footprint of the Holy Prophet was installed on the chest of his grave. [Whosoever] performs pilgrimage here attains blessings.

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3. God be praised as wonderful are the ways of God.
4. Fath Khan, son of *Sultan* Firoz Khan Tughlaq died in his father's lifetime and was never crowned king. The word *Badshah* is therefore more out of respect than a statement of fact.

Qadamgah-e-Hazrat Imam Amir-ul-Mu'minin Ali[1]

[The enclosure containing the foot print of *Hazrat* Ali] is at a distance of 3 *croh* from the fort. On saturday, a large number of pilgrims proceed [towards it] with the desire for felicity in their hearts and offer salutations and obeisance in accordance with their belief[2]. The dust of His [*Hazrat* Ali] threshold is a cure for the ailing and the sweet water of the spring fulfills the desires of the needy, and they tie threads to seek favours [which are duly fulfilled][3]. The 13th day of *Muharram* being the day of the pilgrimage of *Hazart Khamis-e-Aal-e-'Aba*[4] the people gather and perform the rituals of mourning with full customs and traditions in the house of the heavenly abode, There is no living being who does not get the felicitations of this day. The conveyances of the nobles and the plebians crowd the place narrowing it [road] as small as the eye of an ant. Traders adorn their shops and carry out a brisk trade. For the faithful ones there is a

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1. Lit. the house of the foot [print] of *Hazrat* Ali received by Udham Bai known as Qudsiya Begum on a stone in 1137 A.H./ 1724 A.D. She belonged to the *Shia* faith and it was stated to her that this stone bears the foot print of *Hazrat* Ali. MOD, p. 67. Situated in Ali Ganj, near Jor Bagh.
2. The pilgrims adorn the forefront of their headgear with flowers in the form of a salute.
3. The sepulchre chambers of the pious saints are surrounded by lattice screens, fixed in the walls. Those who wish to seek a favour from the saint tie a thread in the screen. On the fulfillment of the desire the same person goes and unties one of the threads. One can therefore find thousands of such threads on these screens.
4. Five members of the family of *Hazrat* Muhammad :-daughter-*Hazrat* Fatima, son-in-law-*Hazrat* Ali, grandsons-*Hazrat* Hasan and *Hazrat* Hussain and the Prophet Himself. The martyr was *Hazrat* Imam Hussain.

chauki khana[5] and it is here that the reciters sing *manqabat* in loud, piercing and meloncholic tones and *qasidas* to get the mandate of salvation from His threshold, attributed with miracles.

Hemistch :

"If you desire the next world then perform pilgrimage here".

Dargah-e-Hazrat Qutb-ul-Aqtab[1]

[The *Dargah* of *Hazrat* Qutb Sahib] is situated at a distance of 7 *croh* from the fort. His blessed place of last abode has been laid in the courtyard of a mosque which has no roof.[2] It is the place of circumambulance for the pilgrims of *Hindustan*, the destination of return[3] and the object of the desirous one [as well]. The piety of its doors and walls is reminiscent of heaven. The blessed environment [of this *Dargah*] denotes the unlimited mercies of God. An extraneous illumination can be perceived at dawn in the surroundings of his grave which imparts a feeling of joy and wonder to the pilgrims. After performing the obligatory prayers the people start circumambulating and thereafter make their homeward journey. Pilgrimage is performed here everyday, but on Thursday this place is extraordinarily crowded. The people who can undertake the journey at night[4], proceed from *Dehli*. After performing pilgrimage they stroll and enjoy the

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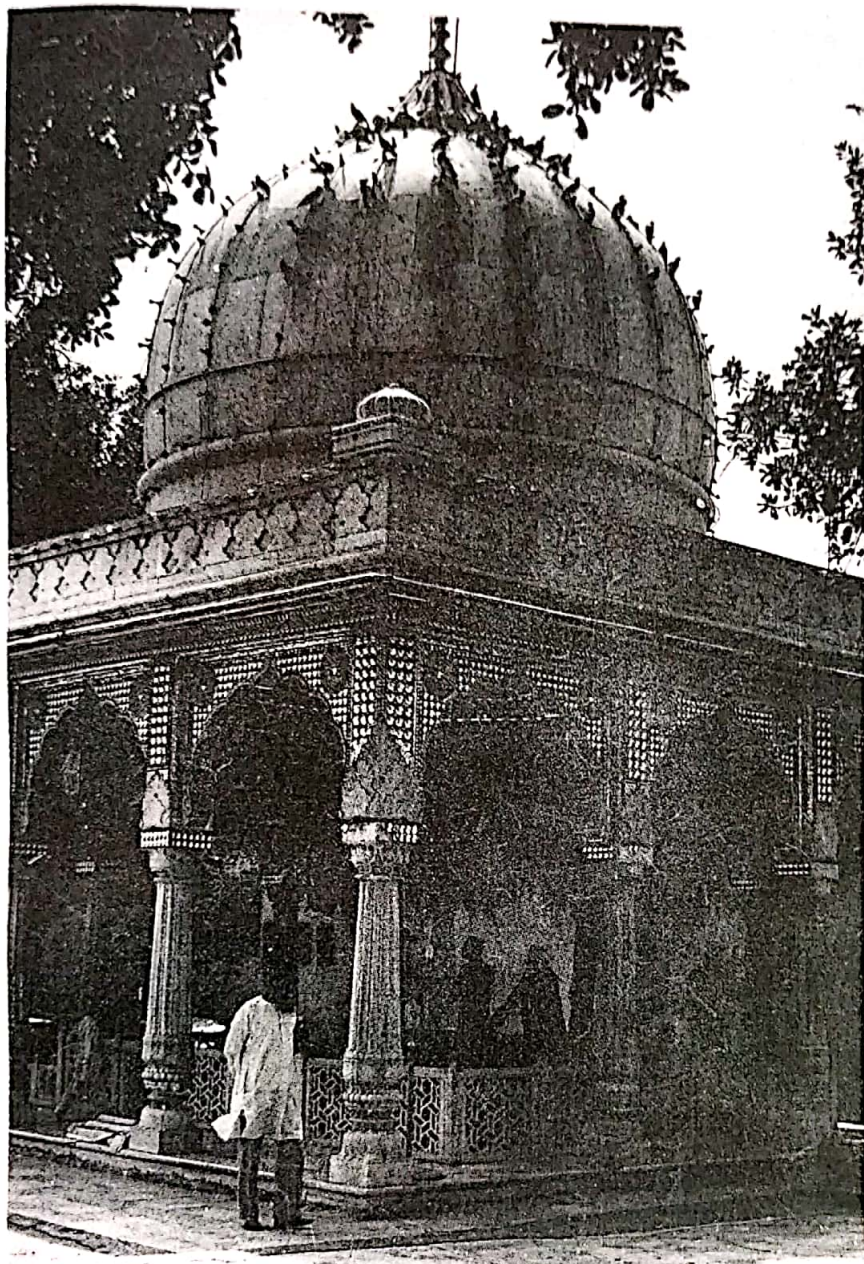
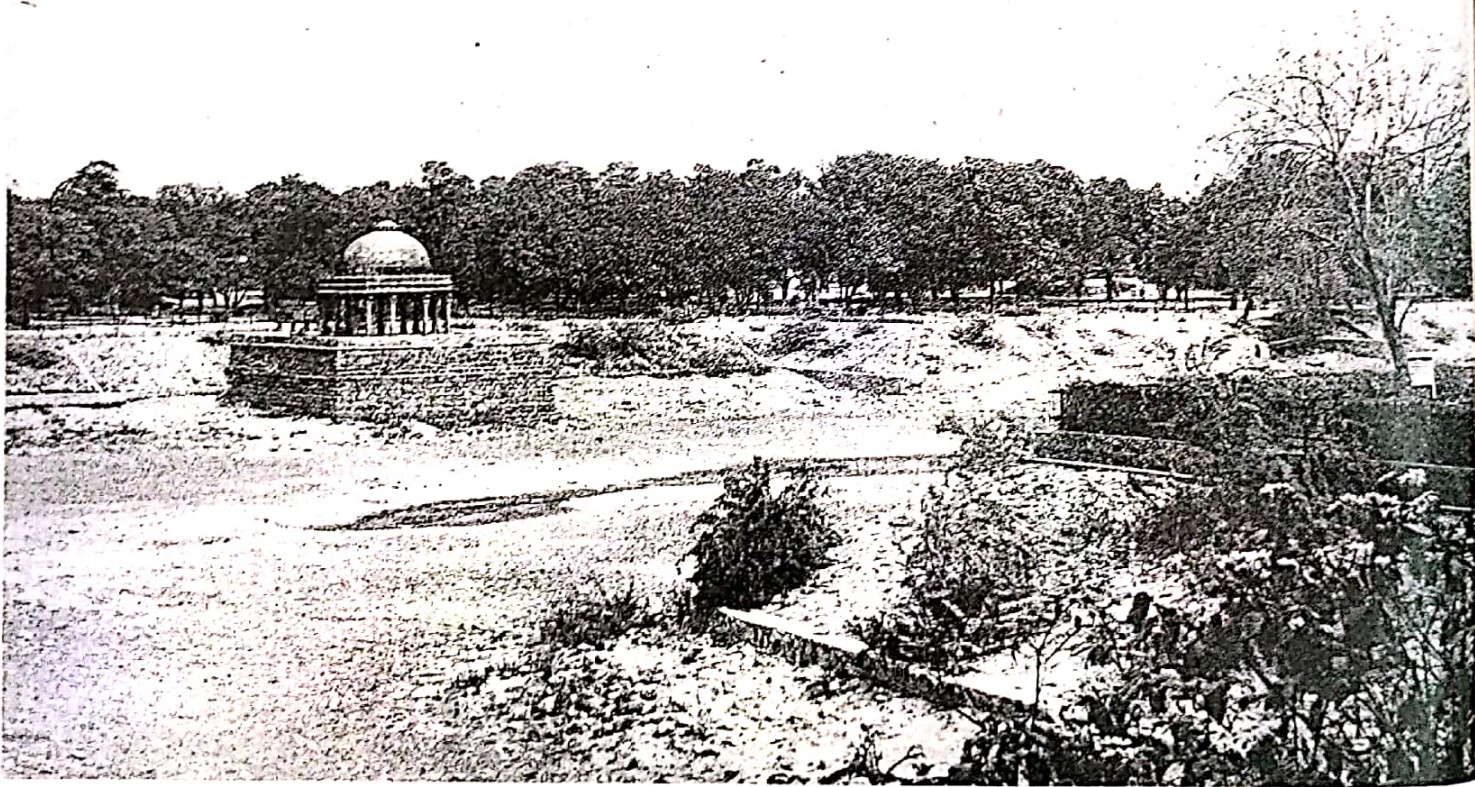
1. *Khwaja* Qutb-ud-Din Bhaktiyar Kaki died on Monday 14th *Rabi'ul-Awwal* 633 A.H./15th Nov. 1236 A.D. His *Dargah* is situated in Mehrauli. AS, p. 96.
2. The mosque was completed and renovated by Emperor Farrukh Siyar. AS, p. 100.
3. According to the belief of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, a pilgrim has to perform pilgrimage first at the *Dargah* of *Hazrat* Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, then at the *Dargah* of *Hazrat* Nizam-ud-Din Aulia and after that at the *Dargah* of *Hazrat* M'uin-ud-Din Chishti of Ajmer and then come back to the *Dargahs* of the first two saints.
4. Those who desired to join in the religious ceremonies in Mehrauli and could walk the distance, started their journey from Delhi at night so as to reaeh their destination by morning. This was also probably done to avoid the heat of the day.

MAUSOLEUM OF QUTB-UD-DIN BAKHTIYAR KAKI

HAUZ-E-SHAMSI

beauty of the gardens and water-springs around here, particularly the *Birka*[5] and *Hauz-e-Shamsi*[6].

Around the pious *mazar* a large number of holy men are resting. The fragrance of the ecstacy continues to reach the believers and the taste of divine love can be felt by the men of piety. Many blessed edifices are situated in the vicinity of this symbol of Paradise, particularly *Masjid-e-Aulia*[7], constructed on the order of *Hazrat Qutb-ul-'Aarifin Khwaja* M'uin-ud-Din Chishti[8] *Quddisa-Sirruhu* [May his grave be hallowed]. Whosoever offers *namaz* here perceives the pleasure of worship. In brief, the abundance of the graves of the saints in the surroundings of the *masjid* is the cause of envy for even the *Rauza-e-Rizwan.* As regards

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5. Fountain, on the eastern side of the *Aulia Masjid,* constructed at the same time as *Hauz-e-Shamsi.* Water for it was also produced from this *Hauz.* SID, p. 48.

6 and 7. It is said that *Sultan* Iltutmish dreamed of Prophet Muhammad alighting from his horse at this spot and so decided to consecrate it by digging a tank [came to be known as *Hauz-e-Shamsi*] that would provide water for Mehrauli and the neighbouring mango orchard. He got watet from *Zam Zam* in Arabia and poured it into this pond. Mystics assembled on the bank of this *Hauz* and offered prayers on full moon nights, Some mystics arranged meetings on the banks of this *Hauz for* confering *Khirqahs* to their disciples. But thc *Hauz-e-Shamsi* was not merely a centre for the religious activities alone. It represented many facets of the Muslim culture of those days. Here one could find mystics lost in their contemplation, scholars busy in their debates and discussions, pcets busy reciting their latest compositions, and also pimps and prostitutes plying their abominable trade. A small white *masjid* was raised at the side of this tank and it was frequented by the muslim mystics. Among those who performed the stipulated 40 days of prayers and meditations [*chilla*] were *Hazrat* Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki, *Hazrat* Nizam-ud-Din etc. SARPIT, pp. 306-07. *Design* : Jan-Feb-March 86. "*Legendary Mehrauli*" by Jehanara Wasi, p. 46.

8. b. 536 A.H./1141 A.D., d. 633 A.H./1236 A.D.
He settled in Ajmer in 1192 A.D. and founded the *Chishtia silsila* in India. SARPIT, p. 182 & *Tarikh-i-Mashaikh-i-Chisht*, p. 199.

the *Eidgah* of this place it is mentioned in the *malfuzat* that *Khwaja* Khizr[9] used to appear here.

The grave of *Hazrat Qazi* Hamid-ud-Din Nagauri[10] is in the neighbourhood of this blessed *mazar*. Bahadur Shah[11] by the force of his [good] fortune is resting by the side of this place of compassion and abundance.

The *Urs* [*of Qutb-ul-Aqtab*] is held on the 16th of the month of *Rabi'ul-Awwal*. A large number of people perform pilgrimage and then enjoy themselves in the surroundings for two days. The *qawwals*, sometimes sitting or standing recite continuously around the blessed Grave. *Shah-e-Shahid* [the martyred king] Muhammad Farrukh Siyar[12] had erected a wall of [white] marble on one side of the threshold. The lattice work is fine and delicate and the transperency of the stone is highly impressive.

qit'a :—

"The king who hoisted the banner of ecstacy of the *faqirs*,
chose seclusion, away from both the worlds,
Qutb-ud-Din is a guide on the path of God,
[like] the *qutb* [polar star] pointing towards the *qibla* [*gah*]".

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9. *Khwaja* Khizr discovered and drank the water of life, where by he became immortal. *Makan-e-Khizr* is mentioned to be one of the places in the surroundings of the said *Dargah* and it is believed that one could have an interview with *Khwaja* Khizr if he performed certain religious practices there. (*Miftah-ut-Talebin*) SARPIT, pp. 306-07 and AS, pp. 77-78,

10. Died 678 A.H./1279 A.D. He hailed from Bukhara and migrated to *Hindustan* with his father. He settled in Nagaur where he was appointed the *Qazi*. Later he came into contact with *Hazrat* Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and spent the rest of his life with him. *Akhbar-ul-Akhiyar*, p. 374 & AUS, pp. 53-54.

11. Emperor Bahadur Shah I—1129 A.H./1712 A.D.

12. 1713-1719 A.D.

BIRKA

The *Urs-e-Mubarak* is held on the 14th[5] day of the month of *Rabi'us-Sani* and the people kiss this threshold, the sign of *Sidrah*[6] and raise their heads with pride. Shortage of space [for free movement] is created by the excess of tents in the surroundings. The *qawwals* recite devotional songs turn by turn all night long [which] transports the *sufis* and the saints to a state of ecstacy. The assembly of chanters continues to make loud noise for a long time. This eminent group and the pilgrims stay awake the entire night. Around the illuminated grave some time recite the *Quran Sharif*, while the others contemplate. A feeling of bounty is experienced at dawn and the *namaz-e-fajr* [Dawn prayer] is performed in a sweet manner.

Below the feet of the pious grave, at a distance of a few *zira*[7], rests *Hazrat* Amir Khusrau[8], Peace be upon him. A strange state of being is felt in the ceremony of his *Urs* and the recitation of the songs goes on. The people employed in the service of the mausoleum have made dwellings for themselves around it and it has now become a populous place. Their livelihood depends on the offerings [both gifts and cash of the devotees] sent through their representatives. Blessed are the people who live in the surroundings of this pious region and continuously obtain the felicity of performing pilgrimage.

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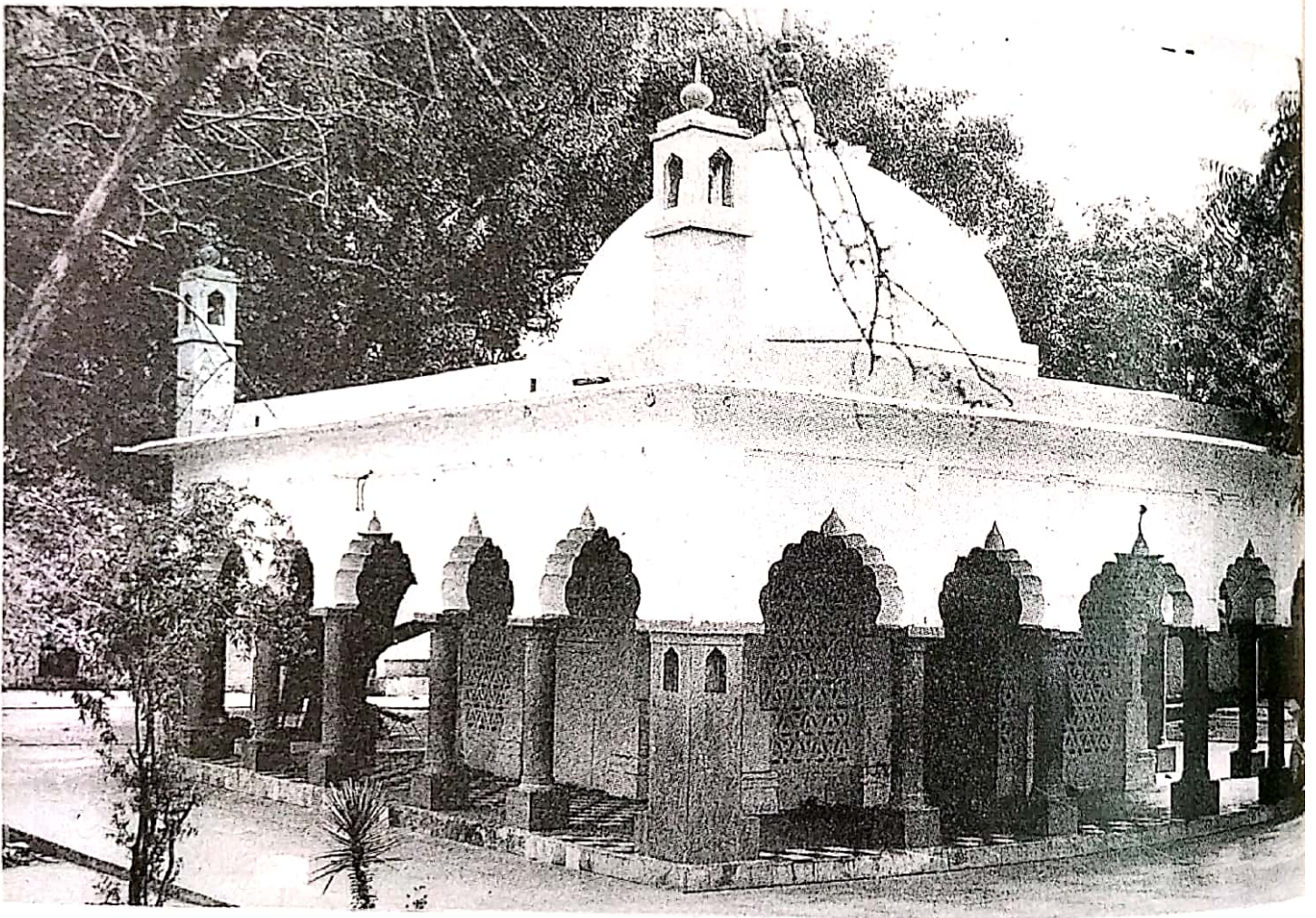
5. AS, 17th day of *Rabi'us-Sani*, p. 38.
6. The heavenly mansion of the angel Gabriel.
7. A cubit—the unit of distance—the arm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger.
8. 651-52 A.H.—725 A.H./1252 A.D.—1325 A.D.

MAUSOLEUM OF NASIR-UD-DIN CHIRAGH DEHLI

Hazrat Nasir-ud-Din Chiragh Dehli

The illuminated mausoleum of this exalted being[1] is at a distance of 3 *croh* from Old *Dehli*[2]. Pleasentness in the vicinity of the mausoleum is akin to that in the *Rauza-e-Rizwan*, and the atmosphere around [his] resting place is like an avenue of paradise. The rays of his perfections flash like the sunbeams from this [piece of] earth while the light of his miracles is like the flicker of a candle through the lantern. His miracles help fulfill the desires of the needy and his concern for the poor makes them happy. Verily, he is not only the *Chiragh-e-Dehli* [lamp of Delhi] but the lamp and the eye of *Hindustan*. Pilgrimage at his *mazar* is performed on Sunday. To obtain the felicity of *ziyarat* large crowds gather on this day, particularly, on the last Suday of the month of *Diwali*. The visitors raise pavilions and tents near the springs of the environs and bathe there. Most of the people with chronic problems get perfect cure. Both Hindus and Muslims perform the same rituals of pilgrimage. Caravans of pilgrims arrive from dawn till sunset and setting up their tents in the shadow of the walls [they] amuse themselves. The place is a spectacle of musical assemblies of good cheer and from every corner sounds of *moor chang* and *pakhawaj* emanate. His *Urs* is performed with full regulations. Emperor Muhammad Shah had an enclosure of stone and mortar built around the exalted *marqad* [and thus] it has a very wide courtyard, perhaps not to be found in any *dargah*. May God their souls be consummated and joined to Him successfully.

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1. *Hazrat* Nasir-ud-Din *Chiragh Dehli* died 757 A.H./1356 A.D. The *Dargah* was built by *Sultan* Firoz Shah Tughlaq in 775 A.H./1373 A.D. AS, pp. 38-39.
2. *Purana Qila.*

Hazrat Shah Turkman Biyabani[1]

[He] is famous for his miracles and wonderful achievements. All are unanimous [in their belief] that he had settled in the place where he now rests even before *Dehli*[2] was inhabited. A few consider him a contemporary of *Qutb-ul-Aqtab*[3] but only God knows the truth. His blessed grave is inside *Shahjahanabad.* His *Urs* is celebrated on the 23rd of the month of *Rajab* and his followers and believers perform the ceremony in a proper manner. Like the [starlit] sky, the courtyard is brilliantly illuminated with lamps and *qandils*. His mausoleum is a place of integrity and is [always] crowded. When the zephyr surrounds the atmosphere the smell of truth comes to mind. All the residents have faith in him and in times of stress and need they go to his mausoleum [to seek help and guidance] and their wishes are fulfilled.

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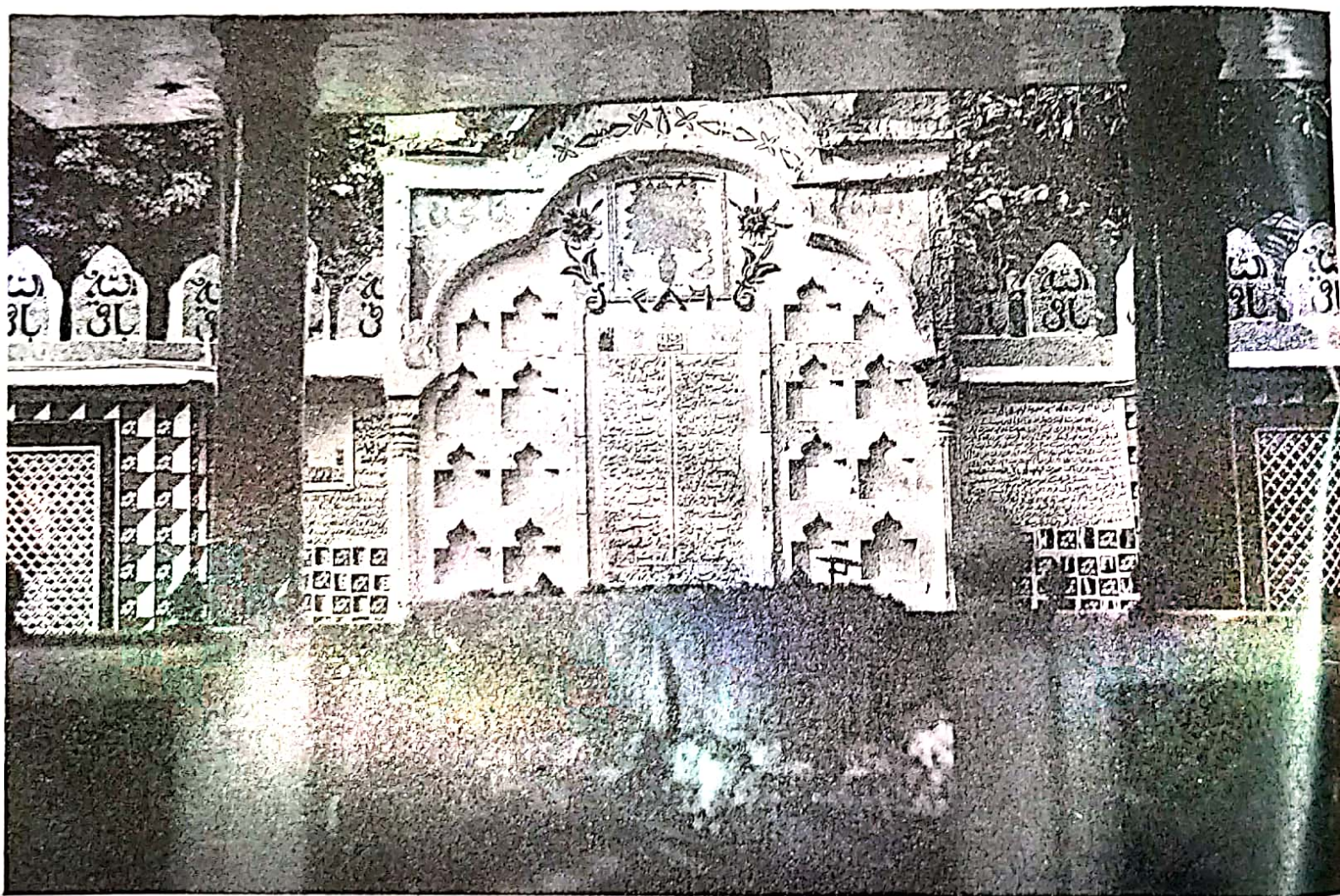
1. Shams-ul-'Aarifin known as Shah Turkman Biyabani belonged to the *Suhrawardiya silsila* of the *sufis*. Died on 24th *Rajab*, 637 A.H./19th Feb. 1340 A.D. during the reign of Mui'z-ud-Din Behram Shah. MT, p. 28 & WDHD, p. 156.
2. *Shahjahanabad.*
3. *Hazrat* Qutb-ud-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki.

MAUSOLEUM OF HAZRAT BAQI BILLAH

Hazrat Baqi Billah[1]

A visit to his [Baqi Billah] pious grave is a duty for the faithful who receive divine assistance here. Ecstacy emanating from its doors and walls welcomes [everyone]. This felicitous land is a place of admonition. The cool courtyard of this place of perfections also provides respite from the hot summer months of *Dehli.* As soon as one enters that courtyard one feels as cool as ice while the hot sun shines outside. One of the marvels is that the residents of this city desire a place of permanent abode in this neighbourhood so that their souls may be saved from the fires of hell. May God keep the sacrosancity of this grave alive.

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1. His real name was Razi-ud-Din Ahmad, and the title of *Khwaja* Baqi Billah was bestowed on him by his *Murshid.* Born in Kabul in 971-72 A.H./1563-64 A.D., he received his edueation in Madina from *Hazrat Khwaja* 'Amaq Naqi and came to *Dehli* in the reign of Akbar. He died in 1012 A.H./1603 A.D. and his *Urs* is celebrated on his death anniversary. His *Dargah* is situated on Qutb Road, near the slaughter house. *Hazrat* Baqi Billah belonged to the *Naqsbandi silsila.* WDHD., pp. 557-59. MT, p. 29 and *Khwaja Baqi Billah.*

Hazrat Shah Hasan Rasul Numa[1]

His [*Hazrat* Rasul Numa] grave is the embodiment of [the virtues of] this world and akin to a small heaven on earth. If you perform pilgrimage here with sincerity of intention you may get a glimpse of the Prophet and your desires [will be] fulfilled with the help of his [*Hazrat* Rasul Numa] pious soul. His *Urs* is celebrated with great rejoicings on the 21st of the month of *Sha'ban*. All the *naqqals* of *Dehli* offer obeisance at dawn and entertain the pilgrims till sunset [when] they return.

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1. *Hazrat* Saiyid Hasan Rasul Numa s/o Shah Muhammad Muqim of Montgomery [Prently known as Sahiwal in Pakistan] came to Delhi during the reign of Aurangzeb from Narnaul [Haryana]. His *Dargah* is situated on Punchkuian Road adjacent to *Andh Mahavidyala.* It was the place of his residence. He died on Saturday, 22nd *Sha' ban* in 1103 A.H./1696 A.D. and was buried here. The date of his demise is inscribed in the outer verandah in the form of a chronogram which reads :-
   "*Hasan Rasul Numa ba Rasul Baqi Shud*".
   For details see the introduction of *Faizan-e-Hasan Rasul Numa* and *Chahar-Gulshan,* folio No. 15. AS, pp. 123-124.

Shah Bayazid Allah Hu[1]

The light of his perfections and pure soul shines from his grave and the compound reflects the beauty of the garden of Paradise.

A colourful *mehfil* is arranged on the day of his *Urs* and pilgrims come here to attain blessings.

He roamed the streets of *Dehli* along with a group of disciples, with a single sheet wrapped around him and a red stick in his hand, barefooted and bareheaded, chanting *Allah Hu!* Hence he came to be known as Bayazid *Allah Hu*.
His grave is adjacent to the *Bagh* of Raushan Ara, near *Subzi Mandi* (old). He belonged to the *Chishti* order of *sufis* and his *Urs* is celebrated on 9th *Rabi'ul-Awwal*.
'For details see *Chahar-Gulshan*, folio 17, 18, *Yadgar-e-Dehli*, p. 128 and SM, p. 118.

Mirza Bedil[1] [Mercy of God Be Upon Him]

The grave of *Mirza* Bedil is in a well adorned enclosure in old *Dehli*.[2] His disciples and the poets gather around the grave to pay homage on the occasion of his *Urs*, celebrated on the 3rd of the month of *Safar*. The *majlis* begins with the recitation of the couplets of [Bedil] from the *Kulliyat* transcribed by himself. On the title page [of this *Kulliyat*] there is a quatrain which goes as follows :—

> 'Inspite of the overflowing virtues and piety of nature reflected on your face, you never fail to acquire more. Everyone is welcome to sift through the collection of thoughts [poems] and derive contentment from them."

After this [inaugural ceremony] the poets take it in turn [according to their heirarchy] to recite their verses and entertain those present.

Muhammad Saeed, a nephew of *Mirza* Bedil, ignorant of the spiritual enlightenment of the *Mirza*, keeps himself busy with the arrangements for the hospitality of those who attend these *mehfils* as well as with the task of lighting the lamps. He sells charms and herbal concoctions the *Mirza* used to make, which are now worth their weight in gold and thus manages to eke out a livelihood for himself. May God keep his [*Mirza* Bedil's] resting place cool and grant him shelter in heaven.

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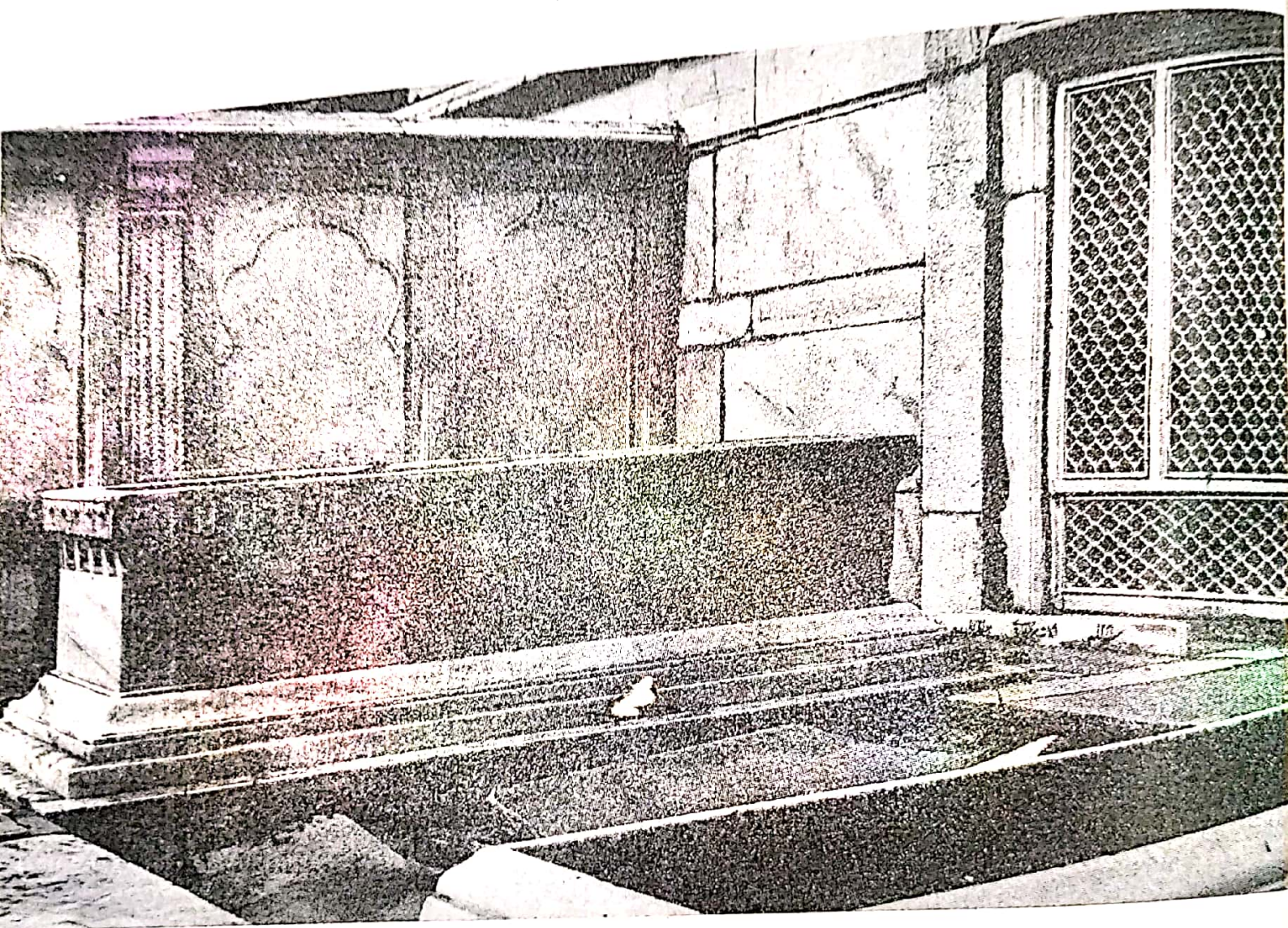
1. A poet philosopher, born in 1644 A.D. in Azimabad (Patna) in the reign of Shahjahan, was among those who composed their poems in a style known as *Sabk-e-Hindi*. He died in 1721 A.D. in Delhi. Ghalib, the renowned poet of Urdu, imitated his style in his Persian and early Urdu poetry. For details see *Sabk-e-Hindi*, HIL, pp. 515-20.
   His tomb is situated in *Bagh-e-Bedil*, adjacent to the National Sports Club of India (NSCI). It authenticity however remains doubtful.
2. *Purana Qila*.

GRAVE OF KHULD MANZIL (BAHADUR SHAH I)

Urs of Khuld Manzil [1]

The *Urs* of Khuld Manzil is celebrated on the 23rd day of [month of sacrifice] *Muharram-ul-Ihram*. His grave is situated beside the grave of *Hazrat Qutb-ul-Aqtab*. His [Khuld Manzil's] Begum, Mehr Parwar, with the help of Hayat Khan Nazir, starts the arrangements for the decoration of lamps [at the grave] a month in advance. Chandeliers of all kinds are hung and the artisans from the royal house come and give the lamps the shape of trees which when lighted put to shame both the cyprus and the box wood trees. When the place is fully lighted it dazzles like sunlight and over-shadows the moon. The sun realizing its unimportance sets and does not show its face before dawn. The towers of lamps throw lights as high as the sky. The bunglows in every lane shine as bright as the valley of *Tur*.[2]

Hand in hand the lovers roam the streets while the debauched and the drunken unmindfull of the *muhatsib* [*kotwal*] revel in all kinds of perversities. Groups of winsome lads and novices [in this trade] violate the faith of the believers through their unappreciated acts which are sufficient to shake the very roots of piety. There are beautiful faces as far as the eye can see. All around prevails a world of impiety and immorality in different hues. The whores and lads entice more and more people to this atmosphere of lascviciousness. Nobles can be seen

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1. The title bestowed upon Bahadur Shah I, 1129 A.H./1712 A.D. SM, p. 234. The date as mentioned by the author of SMu is 19th Muharram at Lahore pp. 381-82.
2. Name of a mountain in Jerusalam where Hazrat Musa was enlightened by God. Encyclopaedia of Islam [Urdu] vol. XII, p. 560.

in every nook and corner while the singers, *qawwals* and beggers outnumber even the flies and the mosquitoes. In short, both the nobles and the plebians quench the thirst of their lust here. But however, it is in one's welfare and prudence to ignore these immodesties.

Mir Musharraf[1]

The grave of this brave noble [Mir Musharraf] of his times lies in a garden near the [mausoleum] of *Mashuq-i-Ilahi* [Hazrat Nizam-ud-Din Aulia]. Its [garden] reservoir and gentle breeze take their freshness from the *Rauza-e-Rizvan.* A small but bewitching canal flows under the enclosure. The beauty of the tree lined surroundings attracts a lot of people who organise *mehfils* in its flourishing atmosphere. The lovers and entertainers arrange to meet here [particularly] during the monsoon. Varieties of blooming flowers spread their breeze and fragrance all over the roads. Their sweet odours would overpower even the most pious of men. Shame upon him! Even if the foolish *muhatsib* were to pass by, he too would be intoxicated by the smells. What a great ignorant he is! These aromatic gardens make the people yearn for wine and when they are enraptured they begin to sing and dance.

Mir Kallu[2] [his son] celebrates the *Urs* [of his father] with great pomp and show and adorns the place with beauty and imagination. The field is arranged with flower beds and the cottages are illuminated with candles and lanterns. The lovely, illuminated domes stand on the broad bank of the canal. The nobles of the court and artists are invited. Mir Kallu is a young man and familiar with the dandy nobles and their ways. They [the nobles] bring their lovers and entertainers and setting their tents on the bank of the canal and under the shade of the trees

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1. Local Afghan from Malihabad. Given the governorship of Awadh but returned at the centre by Farrukhsiyar with a *mansab* of 5000/5000. During the reign of Muhammad Shah his *mansab* was raised to 7000/7000. "The crisis of Empire in Mughal Northern India", pp. 63, 69, 228.
2. Killed in the battle of Karnal against Nadir Shah.

amuse themselves with wine and liquor. Delicious food and other requisites are sent in accordance with the rank of those present and the festivities of dance and entertainment go on all night. The night is celebrated as joyously as the *Shab-e-Barat*[3] and the dawn brings happiness akin to the morning of *'Id-ul-Fitr*.[4]

The festivities continue till the time of retreat [morning]. Everyone is having fun [according to their own style] in their tents and guest houses which are equipped with water. The carpets are spread and the *masnads* have been placed and the arrangement for the reception is made. Dancers and singers are displaying their talents amongst the hosts and the guests. Even the beggers and saints are mesmerized in the environment while the wealthy people rejoice. At the height of these celebrations all hesitations are overcome and the people indulge in their desires and enjoy themselves.

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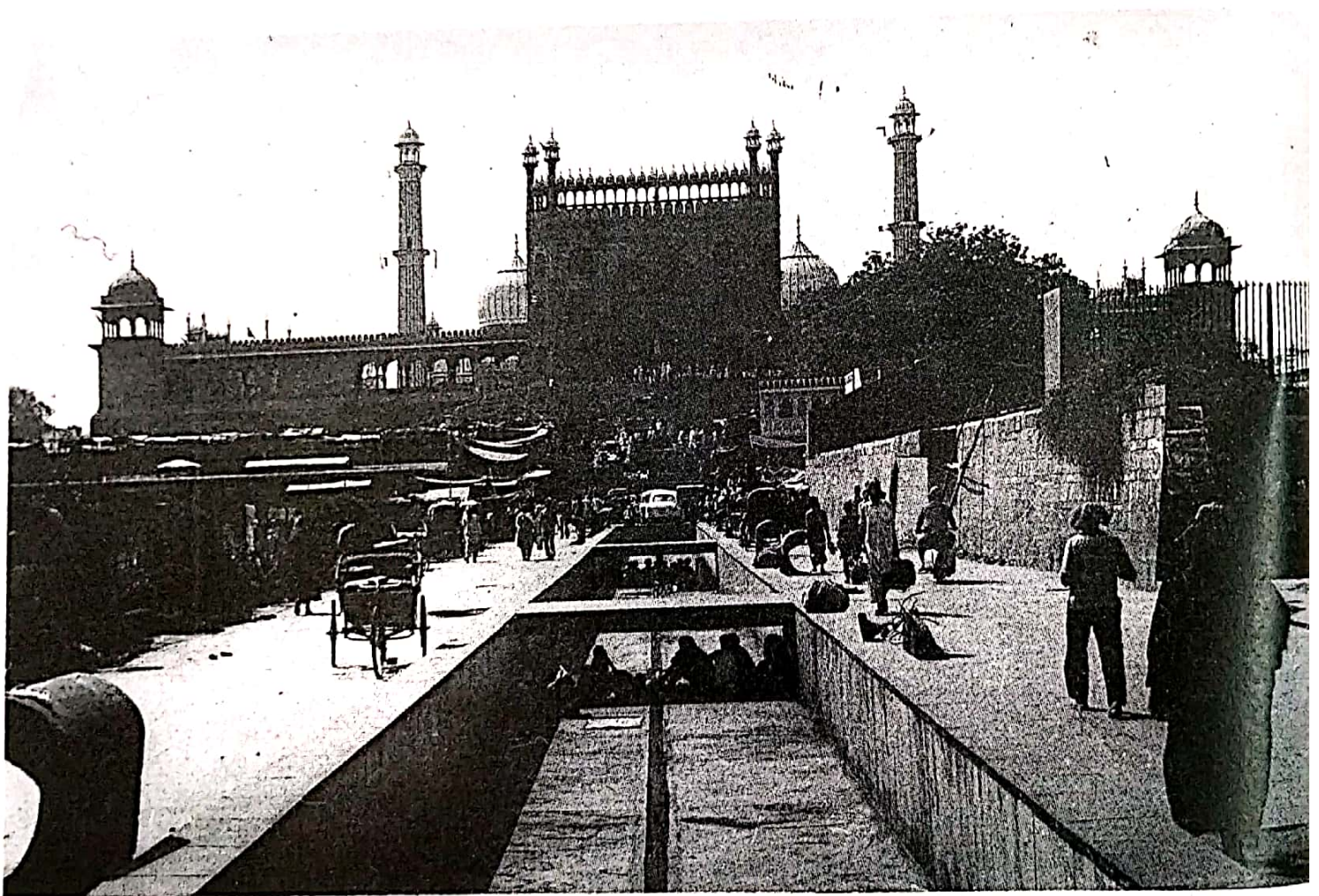
3. The fifteenth night of the Arabic month of *Sha'ban*. Brings salvation and fulfilment of wishes to those who pray for these.
4. The *Id'* following the month of *Ramzan-ul-Mubark* [the month of fasting].

CHOWK SA'ADULLAH KHAN

Chowk Sa'adullah Khan[1]

The uproar [of the chowk] is in front of the gate of the fort and there is a confluence in the surroundings of the *Peshgah* of the *Jalu-Khana*. Goodness! the varieties of goods that are available would easily make a man loose himself here and the poor eyes would smart at the constant exercise of looking at the abundant display of novelties. There are beautiful lads dancing at intervals and the story tellers playing on the imaginations of the people. Seated on the wooden chairs are fortune tellers reminiscent of the *maulvis* on the pulpits, who speak eloquently on the relative importance of each day and month, the virtues of fasting in the month of *Ramzan-ul-Mubarak*, performance of pilgrimage in the holy month of *Zil-Hijj*, as well as the off-seasonal pilgrimage and narrate the incidents from *Rauzatus-Shohda*[2] of the month of *Muharram*. The audience give it their full attention. After making the listeners imbibe these details they [fortune tellers] make them part with the money in their pockets. Congregations and aimless folk sit there till long in the night while these sermons go on.

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1. Sa'adullah Khan was a native of Lahore and a renowned noble during the period of Shahjahan and his *Wazir* from 1655 A.D., and remained in that position for a period of twelve years. This market was named after him and was situated from the stairs of the Eastern Gate of the *Jama-Masjid* upto the barbican of the *Dehli* Gate of the Royal Fort. SM, pp. 12-13.
2. The Garden of Martyrs, the book containing the elegies on the incidents of the *Kerbela* written by Mulla Hussain Kashifi [d. 910 A.H./1504-05 A.D.], a contemporary of Sultan Hussain Mirza Baiqara [1469-1506 A.D.] of Iran. The elegies were recited during the month of *Muharram*. These give an account of the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Husain and other family members. "A History of Sufism in India", vol. II, p. 22 and "Fahang-e-'Amid", p. 540.

In their respective tents, astrologers and geomancers are occupied with their professions of unfolding the mysteries of the world to the clients. People inquire from them about their good and ill fates and are extremely happy when they are told that good fortune awaits them. Even the doctors and *Hakims*, wearing expensive cloths and conical caps sit on their colourful carpets at their respective places and sell multicoloured pouches which are supposedly a variety of medicines but are in fact just muck. People are made aware of the benefit of these medicines in the manner of one fool befooling the other and there are many fools ahead of others wanting to buy this muck. Tablets, antiseptic lotions, medicinal powder, laxatives and *sherbets* are all available in these shops and whatever else a person wishes to buy. There are medicines which help join bones, cure pimples and arthiritis, rheumatism, and veneral diseases especially Gonorrehea and Bubo, the talk of which generates a lot of excitement. Then, there are special potents to make people virile. People are willing to pawn every thing they own for the sake of these magical cures and the *Hakim*, by the sheer force of his words is able to make them part with their money and hands over to them medicines of membrum virile which will increase their [the buyers] power of sensuality and these cuckolds leave for their houses in a state of euphoria. Large varieties of aromatic compounds are also available. Small fires can be seen burning at intervals and the smoke of *Kushta* [the nine metals] is rising in the sky. Ointments of crab and *sauda*, sand-lizard fat [used as an aphrodisiac] which form a part of an antiseptic cream [can be seen] hanging from threads and is being sold to whosoever requires it. *Naqqals* and flatterers stand at their reserved places entertaining [the people] at the requisit occasions. [This place] is full of catamites and beardless lads. Whenever one raises one's eyes there are beautiful faces and when one extends a hand it rubs across someone's neck.

Arm sellers display a variety of uncovered weapons in order to attract the customers who can gauge their sharpness. The cloth merchants display their wares on their arms making the entire atomosphere colourful and outbidding each other in attracting the customers. Besides this, the eatables are also available. If you extend your hand a morsel is sure to be in your mouth. Dry fruits, both indegenous and imported are being sold, just turn your back and taste them. The market of wild birds and beasts leaves a person gasping. Even the wise are confused by the variety of birds displayed here, and are unable to distinguish them unless they possess sound knowledge about them or have thoroughly studied *Mantiqut-Tair*,[3] or have enjoyed the company of Suleman and Asif.[4] This variety of birds and animals is brought here after ruining many forests and fields. Lovers of wild life, particularly winsome lads, go hunting in large numbers and the experienced hunters reside in the hunting lodges. Colourful and intricately made cages [more beautiful than those in which men reside] are displayed. Thus, the goods of human needs and conspicuence are available in this meele of people. At the *Peshgah* of the fort there is a sizeable crowd everyday, through which the nobles and high personages also pass.

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3. An allegorical poem of Muhammad Ibn Fariduddin Attar, one of the most distinguished poet, philosopher and *sufi* of Iran during the period of the *Saljuq* Dynasty.
4. Son of David who succeeded his father on the throne of Israel in 974 and reigned to 937 B.C. "Encyclopaedia Britainica" Vol. XX p. 951. Asif was a sage considered by the Arabians to have been Suleman's grand *wazir*, hence proverbially used for any wise counsellor. "Steingars", p. 69.

Chandni Chowk [1]

Chandi Chowk is the most beautiful and profusely decorated passage in the city. It is a centre of recreation for the pleasure seekers and a gallery of rareties for the interested buyers. Displayed in the shops and ready for sale are varieties of cloth and other goods. The nooks and corners are replete with unique objects procured from different parts of the world. The paths [of the *chowk*] are broad as a wide forehead and bountiful like the blessings of God. The canal[2] is full of good and clean water and seems as though it is flowing in paradise. Rubies and gems from *Badakhshan* adorn the shops [of the jewellers] and their counters abound with pearls and precious stones. The proprietors sit contentedly on one side of the passage while their subordinates carry out the daily trade. On the other side are cloth merchants beckoning loudly in their sing-song voices to attract the attention of the customers. All day long they carry on a one sided conversation irrespective of whether anyone is interested or not. The *Attars* selling varieties of perfumes and essence carry out a brisk trade with the help of their

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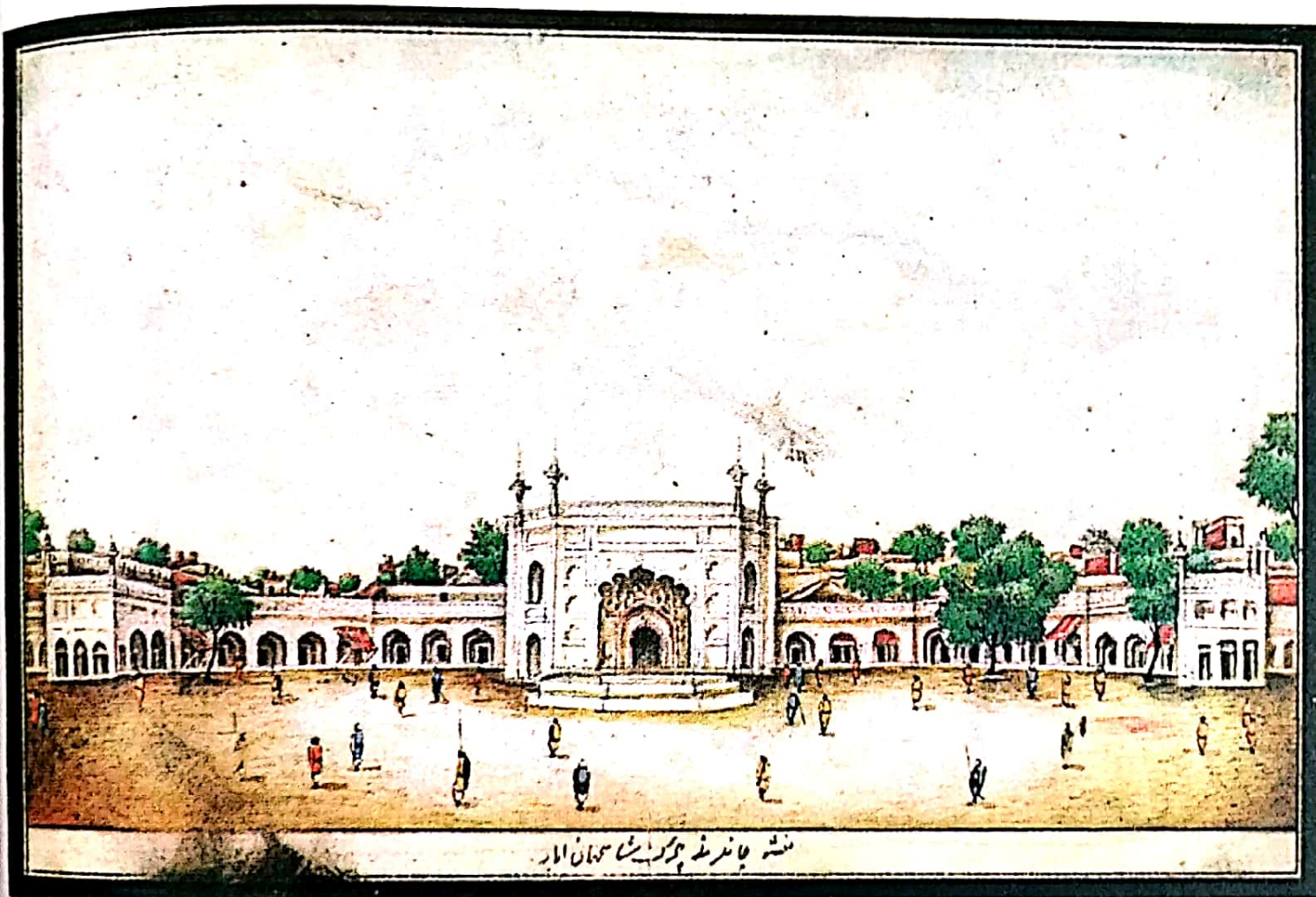
1. In front of the Lahauri gate there is a *bazar* measuring 40 yards in width and 1520 yards in length. It was laid out by Jahanara Begum [daughter of Shah Jahan] in 1060 A.H./1650 A.D. There is also a *chowk* 80 yards square at a distance of 480 yards from the Lahauri Gate of the fort. *Kotwali Chabutara* is situated in this *chowk*. An octagonal *chowk* measuring 100 × 100 yards is also there at a distance of 400 yards from the previous one. This is called *Chandni Chowk*. Beautiful shops are situated around it. MOD, pp. 20-21.
2. Canal was reopened by Ali Mardan Khan in the reign of Shahjahan after he decided to shift the capital of the Mughal Empire from Agra to *Dehli* [*Shahjahanabad*], in 1638 A.D., originally founded by Jalal-ud-Din Firoz Shah Khalji in the year 691 A.H./1291, A.D.

CHANDNI CHOWK

agents and smooth talk. Their perfumes send vapours to the minds of its lovers who come to buy them without any beckoning on the part of the shopkeepers. The heart is completely taken in by the swords, these arched and glistening objects, but one should take care lest the hand is allowed to slip on the sharp blade. On beholding these snake like daggers one wishes the enemy were close for attack and it is better to keep some distance from them. All the self control one imposes here on oneself melts away at the sight of the China crockery and a variety of colourful and gilded *huqqas* of glass. Bowls, jugs and exquisite wine cups are displayed in the shops which attract even the aged pious to savour a drink. Men can be found standing on the roads selling such a range of choicest clothing that the wares of the shopkeepers are dull by comparision. Perhaps even the houses of the nobility do not have such things. Besides, in the evening when the sun spreads its rosy hue, the vivid and the kaleidoscopic scene which meets the eye is not to be found even while strolling in the gardens.

Around the *chowk* are many *Qahwa khanas*[3] where eloquent poets are to be found reciting their verses and eliciting praise from those present. The nobles, irrespective of their status are unable to suppress their desire of taking a stroll here. The assortment of rare and unique goods available in this market cannot be bought at one time even if the treasury of *Qarun*[4] was at one's disposal.

A son of a [deceased] nobleman wanted to stroll in this *chowk*. His mother, convincing him of her inability [to give more money] handed him an amount of a lakh of rupees from the wealth left behind by his father. [She said] that rare things cannot be purchased from this *chowk* for this small sum, but, however as he is inclined to go there, some essential items of his choice can be obtained.

. Coffee House.

4. Name of the son of Moses' paternal uncle, the Korah of the Old Testament, and proverbial for his wealth. "Steingars", p. 947.

Hafiz Shah Sa'adullah [1]

His virtues of dignity, exaltation, abilities and perfections are difficult to put into words. People believe that he has attained the *wilayat*, while some think of him as *Qutb*.[2] Although he has been deprived of sight his inner being is full of mystical enlightenment and it is this which shines on his forehead and shows the right path to mankind. Ascetics come to his *Khanqah* to purify their worldly beings and to attain blessings in order to increase their accomplishments. The company is entertained with complete silence as he is generally to be found in a state of contemplation. He belongs to the esteemed *Naqshbandi silsila* and thus he has no inclination towards *sama*. May God grant the benediction of your felicitious company to the people.

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1. He was the grandfather of Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddis Dehlavi author of *Akhbarul-Akhiyar*. He was the disciple of Shaikh Muhammad of Malwa. As, p. 39.
2. Axis of circumspection.

Shah Ghulam Muhammad Dawal Pura [1]

The grandeur of his asceticism and the magnificence of his conversations stupefies even the greatest of men. When his pious discourses fall on the ears of the affluent it strikes terror amongst [them]. Inspite of having a large number of followers he has renounced the attractions of this world and lives a life of austerity. A group comprising *derveishes, faqirs,* and dependants live day and night in the vicinity of his felicitious residence and obtain the agreeable share from the offered victuals. His egalitarion temperament sees to it that all the gifts are distributed equally amongst the people and that no one is deprieved of it. After the first part of the night *Khichri* is prepared and everyone eats it together. The attendents of the inner portion also receive their required share.

The largest portions of the gifts are bestowed on the *qawwals* who reside in these felicitious surroundings. They live like his [Shah Ghulam Muhammad] shadow, insperable and maintain an atmosphere of ecstacy with their singing. The people experience themselves as different beings in the abode [of Shah Ghulam Muhammad]. His attitude is similar towards the rich and the poor. Time and again requests have come from the Imperial Court and the nobles that he should accept the daily requirements but he has never agreed to lend an ear [to their entreaties]. He is a *sufi* of the older generation and his sense of generosity is unique in these days.

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1. One of the nobles in the court of Sultan Mahmud Meqana. Muzzaffar Husain has mentioned one of his allegorical poems *Nasir-Nama* in MD, p. 27.

Shah Pansad Mani

[Shah Pansad Mani] is a native of Turan. His stocky build and shining forehead reveal his exalted personality. With him can be seen a group of Mughal *faqirs.* He receives large sums for the community kitchen from the Turani nobles. His mode of conveyance is a donkey for which he has become very famous and he is very fond of it. At night he is a guest at someone's house and spends his days addressing the gatherings. The followers of the Shah include a *Salat Khani*[1] *faqir* who is famous for his oversized turban which he ties in a peculiar manner. The nobles take his extraordinary turban in the inner apartments[2] where it is a source of amusement. The turban probably weighs 20 *ser.*[3] The weight of his head is reduced when he removes the turban to lie down. May God grant him lightness.

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1. One who performs all the obligatory prayers.
2. It is not clear in the text whether the *faqir* is taken in the inner chambers or just his turban. The latter possibility has been interpreted here as it seems improbable that a man is taken inside the ladies apartments.
3. Unit of weight.

Mir Saiyid Muhammad [1]

The forehead of [Mir Saiyid] glistens like the rays of the Sun and his face mirrors his high ancestry. The greatness of his piety and divinity is as vast as the sky. His outer appearance scares the pilgrims and his booming voice sends tremors in the hearts of addressees. His magnificent personality can be discerned from his gatherings while his attainments in the field of asceticism are reflected in his surroundings. His style of living is unique and fearless, always mindful of speaking the truth. His criticism of the *Badshah* and the nobles at their face is proverbial. During the reign of *Khuld-Makan* [Aurangzeb] he renounced his *mansab* and took to the life of asceticism. Many *Sultans* and nobles have requested him to accept a *suyurghal*, but he pays no heed to their entreaties and is content with his ascetic life style. [Mir Saiyid] even refuses gifts from them, but [occasionally] accepts [gifts] from strangers.

His sons and relatives are holding offices in the Imperial Court and wish to fulfill any desire he may have, so that in return they may be better rewarded in life. But [he never expresses a desire for any thing that this world can provide and therefore] they get no such opportunity. His style of conversation is both cultured and sweet and full of subtle humour. Consequently a large number of followers are always to be seen with him. He is unanimously acclaimed for his achievements, virtues and miraculous performances by the residents of *Dehli*. The

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1. He was a noble in the court of Aurangzeb, but turned to the life of asceticism following the controversy regarding his association with Shaikh Muhibuddin Allahbadi. For further details see MU Vol. III, pp. 604-611.

following verse of Maulvi Nizami[2] aptly describes his state:—

"O God, in my younger days I never went to anyone,
You sent all at my door,
I did not wish for anything, even though you bestowed everything on me."

This *faqir*[3] often met the Saiyid and derieved pleasure from his company and desired to be blessed with strength and stability.

Couplet:—

"The people who turn ash into gold by the turn of their eyes,
would it not be possible if they did the same to us to change us for the better."[4]

Once the *Nawwab Sahib* [Nizam-ul-Mulk] went to pay his respects to him [Saiyid] but the latter paid no attention to him. After hearing the words of wisdom the Nizam returned without benifitting from them.

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2. Nizami Ganjavi [b. 535 A.H./1134 A.D.] of Iran of the *Saljuq* period. He was famous for his quintet generally known as *Khamsa-e-Nizami*.
3. Dargah Quli Khan.
4. Hafiz.

Majnun Nanak Shahi [1]

His emaciated frame befits his name. His ascetic nature and lifestyle are familiar to the people of all walks of life. His [*Majnun's*] forehead personifies knowledge and perfection [while his] speech showers blessings on the people. His beautiful hospice is located on the bank of the *Jamuna*. [*Majnun*] comes out of his alcove at specific hours to grant an audience to his followers. A large number of Hindus and Muslims with the desire to see him set forth towards [this] place of recreation and call on him with great respect and reverence. When the procession is moving towards the specific place, the worshippers surround it from both sides. Flowers, sweets and eatables brought for him, he distributes a little to all those present. After this, the *Majnun* sits at the door of his alcove in a posture of such quietitude that no one dares to make any coversation and he himself does not speak unless required. The *Majnun's* posture indicates that he is in deep meditation, and the people gathered find so much solace there that they prefer to remain silent. Only the *qawwals* can be heard offering obeisance without any restraint and receive suitable rewards. Wealthy Hindus make rich offerings to him and in their false belief regard him as the *Nanak* of this age.

The attendants also seem to live in a state of prosperity. Due to the favours [of the *Majnun*] many live a life of peace and even the *faqirs* and dependents manage to have a meal. As his abode is near the river, many boats are kept ready to take people out for boating. To

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1. He lived during the reign of Aurangzeb. His name is mentioned by the author of *Mirat-ul-Alam* in the list of the saints of Aurangzeb's period. p. 48.

this day it remains a place for diversion and recreation. Innumerable women with the temperament of *Lailas* come here in their palaquins to meet the *Majnun*. Leaving their conveyances under the shade of the trees they meet him [*Majnun*] alone. They speak to him of their hidden desires, and seek his help. The *Majnun* recites a couplet on their condition:—

"One night *Majnun* said to *Laila*,
O careless Beloved, thy may get a lover,
But thou will not be the [same as] *Majnun*."

Monsoon adds great beauty to the surroundings of the hospice. On the tenth day of *Muharram* a large crowd gathers on the occasion of washing the *Alams*[2] of the procession [of Ta'*ziyeh*][3] of *Hazrat* Imam Husain [Peace Be Upon Him], creating an atmosphere of pomp and show. For all those who are for "Peace with Ali" it is [difficult] to leave his hospice, as his company is conducive to that state.

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2. Standards. An *alam* represents the banner of Iman Husain's army and is considered to be the most important symbol of mourning.
3. The word *Ta'ziyeh* literally means expressions of sympathy, mourning and consolation. As a dramatic form it has its origins in the *Muharram* processions commemorating Hussein's martyrdom and throughout its evolution the representation of the seige and carnage at *Karbela* has remained its centrepoint. '*Ta'ziyeh*; Indegenous Avant-Garde Theatre of Iran', p. 3.
   The word *Ta'ziyeh* has a different connotation in India......an actual object, a small reproduction of the tomb of Hussein. This is carried in *Muharram* processions......at the termination of which [on the *Ashura* day] it is buried. 'Muharram Ceremonies in India' "*Ta'ziyeh : Ritual and Drama in Iran*", pp. 222-223.

Shah Azizullah

The blessed grave [of Shah Azizullah] is situated in a beautiful structure in old *Dehli*[1]. The faithful followers have had a small and beautiful building erected and its courtyard is under construction. The smell of the breeze blowing in this place is as sweet as the air of paradise. Even the *Bagh-e-Iram*[2] pays tribute to this flower adorned courtyard. It is a place of entertainment and pleasure for the lonely as well as those desirous of privacy. The successors [of Shah Azizullah] never sit idle [but are always performing prayers and salutations]. On reaching here a person becomes entranced and oblivious to all worldly cares. During his [Shah Azizullah's] lifetime there was a sinner. Whenever he came out of his house the crows would bruise him severly with their beaks. He sought help from all in the city, visited every holy tomb, but all were unable to intercede [on his behalf to have] his sins forgiven. The grandees of the time advised him to seek the favour of the Shah who alone could relieve him of his suffering. His desires were fulfilled the moment he reached the great *Khanqah* [of the Shah]. His [Shah's] miracles are countless and the people still come to seek help from his blessed grave. On the day of his *Urs* a special *sama* is held and [both] the saints and ordinary men are found in a state of ecstacy. [This place] is a place of circumambulation and [attainment] of desires.

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1. Purana Qila.
2. Garden in Paradise.

Sultan Shamsuddin Ghazi[1]

His auspicious grave is situated in the bottom of a cave near the *Dargah* of *Hazrat Qutb-ul-Aqtab*. Although he was a *Sultan*, as a result of constant company with the saints and the unitarians he attained the high stage of of *wilayat*. His perfections are enumerated in the book *Riyaz-ul-Aulia*[2]. The atmosphere in the garden around the sepulchre chamber is akin to that of *Rauza-e-Rizvan*, and this blessed land blooms like the land of Paradise. During the monsoon, wild flowers and greenery are to be found in abundance, comparable to the gardens of Kashmir. The softness of the breeze touches the heart. The visitors experience bliss and pleasure when they pay homage to it [tomb] and are enraptured while circumambulating it. May God's enlightenment be on his grave.

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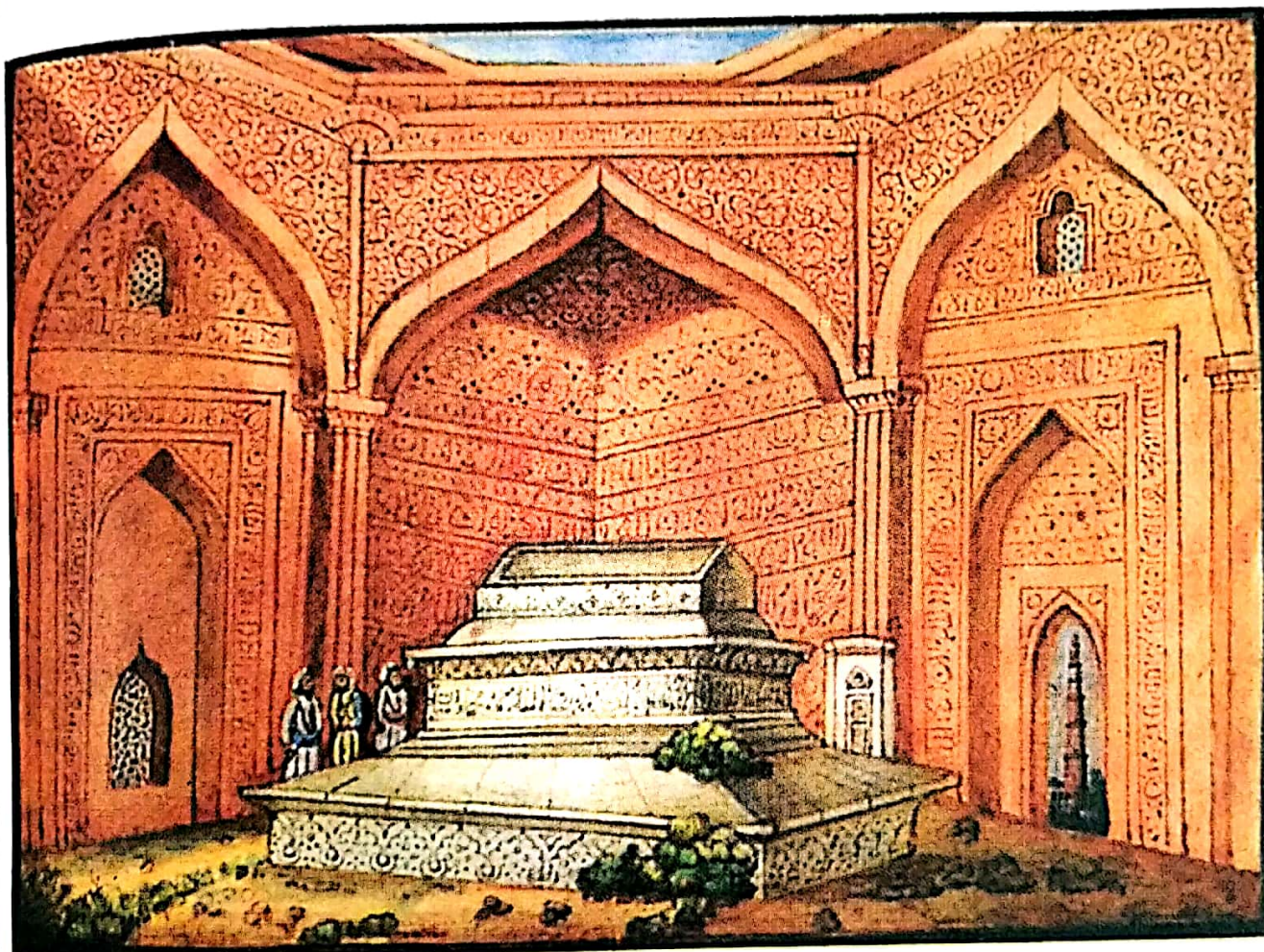
1. Sultan Shamsuddin Iltutmish who ruled from 1210-1236 A.D. The tomb is situated within the present compound of the *Qutb Minar*.
2. Written by Shaikh Muhammad Baqa bin Ghulam Muhammad Saharanpuri 1037 A.H.-1094 A.H./1627-28 A.D.-1683 A.D. In the *Riyaz-ul-Aulia* he gave biographical details of important Indian *sufis* along with notes on the first four caliphs and *Imams*. "A History of Sufism in India", p. 30.

MAUSOLEUM OF SULTAN ILTUTMISH

Mashaikh

Shah Kamal[1]

In the world of asceticism he is a nobleman renowned for the unparalled adornment of his garb. His clothes are made of fine, thin cloth and the eatables are prepared for him with great attention and cleanliness. He is endowed with a good physique. These qualities endear him to everyone. He is ardently fond of ecstacy and *sama* and with the use of *sufi* terminology and metaphors makes his speeches powerful and interesting. His presence often decorates the gatherings of the *Urs* and the *majalis*. Seeing him reach a state of ecstacy punctuated with pauses and rests, people are mesmerised. They are delighted with his elegant couplets of urdu and persian and respond enthusiastically at their [couplets] recitation. His command over urdu poetry is akin to his name [*Kamal* i.e. perfection]. In his company are to be found all those people who are very well versed in their field, and from this atmosphere one derieves a great sense of fulfilment.

1. Shakir Khan the author of *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani* mentions Shah Kamal as one of the prominent mystics of this period. "The reign of Muhammad Shah", p. 369.

Shah Ghulam Muhammad [1]

His *Khanqah* is adjacent to the stables of Dara Shikoh.[2] On every Tuesday the gatherings of *sama* are celebrated here and the *qawwals* of the city and those desirous of taking part gather and derieve great pleasure out of it. His blessed forehead reflects his spiritual accomplishments while his perfections are conspicuous through his speeches. Most of the time he remains in a state of quietitude and contemplation. His fondness for *sama* takes him regularly to the residence of Taj Khan *qawwal*[3] where a *majlis* is held on the 5th day of every month. The above mentioned person is a great devotee [of Shah Ghulam]. He [Shah Ghulam] bestows his blessings on his devotees who visit him and [he] favours them with his interesting discourses. His company and service are extremely helpful for those desirous of choosing the right direction in life.

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1. Rustam Ali, author of *Tarikh-i-Hindi*, has given a long list of theologians, teachers, jurists and mystics who enriched the religious life of the city. Among the well known mystics is Shah Ghulam Muhammad. "The reign of Muhammad Shah", p. 369.
2. Eldest son of Shahjahan, d. 1659 A.D.
3. See chapter on Artists.

Shah Rehmat Ullah [1]

[Shah Rehmat Ullah] is the leader of the *shaikhs* of the city and is popular [for his good deeds] all over the world. His piety links him to high personages and the masses are dependent upon him [to show them the path of God]. A gathering of *zikr* and a *majlis* of *sama* are usually found at his place. He has four wives and turn by turn spends one day with each one of them. Inspite of his old age he looks young for his years. Although renowned for spiritual attainments his fondness for liquor continues. [He thinks] perhaps something good will come out of it. He is forever helpful to [those] needy ones who wish him to write letters for them. [Shah Rehmat Ullah] is the leader of his times and the chief spokesman at the *majlis*. His blessed presence is worth honouring and his feet are worthy of worship and reverence.

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1. A disciple of Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Janan. "A History of Sufism in India", p. 248.

Azam Khan[1] *Son of Fidwi Khan*

[Azam Khan] is the nephew of *Khan-e-Jahan Bahadur Alamgiri*[2] and one of the chief nobles [of the Empire]. In consonance with his temperament he has perfect command in music and *raags* and is often praised by the *Hindustani* musicians. A pederast, he is fond of beautiful girls as well. His income from his *jagirs* is spent on maintaining his large retinue. Whenever he is informed of the availability of a lad or a beautiful girl he endeavours to be the buyer or through some obligation makes them favourably inclined towards himself. A few of them are now adorning high offices of the state where they have reached with the help of his favours. The others continue to live in his house and illuminate his blissful *mehfils*. His conveyance is a fleet of flying horses. [In short] whenever a beautiful lad is seen it is taken to be associated with Azam Khan and [if] any winsome boy appears he is [sure] to be fraternised by him [Azam Khan]. Behind the shadow of the amusements provided for him by these people he is not unmindful of the approaching winter of his life. Thus, he wishes to quench the thirst of his lust within this short span of time.

Mirza Munnu[3], a man of noble birth, is also perfect in this art [of sodomy]. In fact he acts as a guide to the

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1. His real name was Muzzaffar Husain and he was famous as Azam Khan son of Fidwi Khan Koka. The title of Azam Khan was bestowed upon him during the reign of Muhammad Shah. He died in 1089 A.H./1678 A.D. For details see MU, pp. 247-52.
2. Foster brother and *Mir Bakshi* of Emperor Muhammad Shah. "Reign of Muhammad Shah", p. 8.
3. Governor of Ajmer, and son of Qamruddin Khan—Wazir of Muhammad Shah. "Crises of Empire in Mughal Northern India", p. 49.

novices who in turn feel proud to imbibe this trade from him. He organises *mehfils* where groups of lads are made available. His house is the palace of *Shaddad*[4], full of fairly like lasses. The lads and lasses who are not associated with his [Mirza Munnu] *mehfils* are erroneous [in their claims]. These *mehfils* are occassions where the beauty and other attributes of these people are judged, and are not considered worthy unless they pass the test here. The molten gold or silver [novice lads and lasses] have to go through the furnace of his [Azam Khan] assemblies before they become standardised.

Ruba'i:[5]—

"Friends, in this Gambling house [World] there are very few *rinds*,
[however] they do not associate with the imposters.
[Although] the *rinds* are few, their specific number is not known,
[but] they laugh at this attraction towards the materialistic things of this world.

4. Name of an impious king and founder of *Bagh-e-Iram* where all the beautiful whores get together.
5. Quatrain.

Latif Khan [1]

His [Latif Khan] delightful company is the schedule of the pleasure seekers. He is the son of a nobleman and all his energies are devoted to organising *mehfils* of music. He himself is so well versed in *raag* that even N'emat Khan visits him at his house and applauds his style of singing. His recitation is so popular and amusing that even those in high offices find it difficult to gain admission to his *mehfils*. He is par excellence in singing and colourful speech. Similar to the vessel which retains the colour of wine, Latif Khan is always intoxicated without savouring wine. During *mehfils* his amusing anecdotes and verses take the place of *nuql*. He extends his warm hospitality to all, [and] even those coming here for the first time feel a part of his coterie of intimate friends and associate themselves with him forever. Everyone enjoys wine in his company. Beautiful *huqqas*, wine goblets and flagons along with eatables are put forth individually for everyone. The singers and musicians give an account of their talents alternately. Along with singing a lot of jokes are recited and *Badih Goi*[2] takes place.

These *mehfils* start from the second half of the day and carry on till the first part of the night. After this he [Latif Khan] retires for the night and the gathering disperses. Earlier Nur Bai and other dancers and singers and noted musicians were a special attraction in these *mehfils*, but, ever since he [Latif Khan] laid most of his capital at the

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1. A *Panj hazari* [5000/5000] *mansabdar* in the court of Emperor Muhammad Shah ML, pp. 590-91.
2. Repartee.

feet of the Emperor[3] the *mehfils* have become very subdued. Still, some conoisseurs are always to be found there and merry making continues till the first part of the night.

Latif Khan used to recite this couplet which is being repeated in his memory :-

> "In the *mehfil* of intoxicants there is no morning and night,
> for it is the cup that rotates here and not time."

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3. Emperor Muhammad Shah collected money from nobles and other rich persons of the city to pay the required sum to Nadir Shah. "Uttar Mughal Kaleen Bharat ka Itihas", pp. 220-221.

Basant[1]

Festivity and hustle bustle can be found in *Qadam Sharif* of the Holy Prophet in the month of Basant. After decking themselves the inhabitants of the city gather from morning, on either side of the tree-lined roads of that [holy place]. In the courtyard and surroundings of this place of felicity, everyone tries to surpass the other in making merry and wait impatiently for the *qawwals*, dancers and pilgrims. The *qawwals* and singers pay their tributes by reciting their compositions in a delightful manner and [the pilgrims] present colourful bouquets and pray for the pious soul of the Prophet. With perfect humbleness the singers lead with slow, deliberate steps. Alongside the groups of pilgrims with odourferous perfumes in their hands [move] sprinkling it on the people [who are] attracted to this object of inclination [*Qadam Sharif*]. On seeing beautiful women carrying in their hands porcelain bottles of perfume, the crowds becomes uncontrollable.

The smells of ambergris and other fragrances emerge from the dust of the roads and the vicinity of this luminous place. The ecstatic people move around as though being swept into a whirlpool and chant [continuously]. Adept singers and novices line up this intersection to pay tribute and offer obeisance with their vocal and instrumental renderings in the customary style. On the other side of the pious place the old *qawwals* pay homage by rubbing their foreheads on the threshold with dedication. Singers and dancers exhibit their art which

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1. The festival of Basant was celebrated amongst the Muslims since the time of Hazrat Nizamud-din Aulia. For details see, "Amir Khusrau", pp. 187-95.

for them is their kind of worship. Devout pilgrims send their greetings to the Prophet. From sunrise to the time of *Namaz-e-'Asr* the singers pay their tributes turn by turn with deep regard and after that return home, with the flowers of acceptance and desires [yet to be fulfiled].

Similarly, on the second day the singers and musicians visit [the *Dargah* of] *Hazrat Qutbul-Aqtab* [Hazrat Bukhtiyar Kaki] and offer salutations. While returning they circumambulate the *Dargah* of *Hazrat Chirag Dehli* and light candles there. On the third day a large number of people can be seen moving towards the mausoleum of *Hazrat Sultanul-Mashaikh* [Hazrat Nizamud-din-Aulia] which being close to the city makes everyone inclined to visit it. A *majlis* of *sama* is organized here, and each *sufi* tries to outdo the other in attaining the state of ecstacy. The saints and the *faqirs* enjoy themselves the most.

On the 4th day, the singers and the musicians who have faith in *Hazrat* Shah Rasul Numa, gather at his grave, in the heart of the city. The large courtyard of this place of felicity spills with the crowds and artists who gather here in large numbers and it becomes impossible for the pilgrims and others to pass through this area. On the 5th day the *mehfil* takes place at the threshold of *Hazrat* Shah Turkman. Amongst those who gather there are *sufis* and beautiful women who are a source of envy for even the stars and the paradise. All the singers and *qawwals* who reside in the neighbourhood come and sing in turn and receive many thanks from the listeners.

According to their schedule on the sixth day they go to the residences of the *Badshah* and the nobles with the desire of receiving some worldy goods. On the night of the 7th [day] of this month, all the dancers [of the

city] get together and go the grave of *Azizi*, in *Ahadipura*[2], and wash it with wine, and take it in turn to dance. They feel their dancing and singing will provide peace and pleasure to his soul. Gradully the *qawwals* also gather and the *mehfil* becomes very gay, and men and beautiful women also join in. People retire in corners and find the privacy to enjoy their desired company. Thus, the pleasure seekers and the visitors join in the revellry of these six days and derive a year worth of pleasure. What Good Luck they have.

2. A colony of the gentleman troopers. *Ahadis* were commanded directly by the Emperor. "Urdu-English Dictionery", p. 38 and "The crisis of Empire in Mughal Northern India", p. 46.

Yazdahum[1]*-e-Miran* [2]

The above mentioned person being the epitome of humility, well mannered and hospitable is envied amongst the peers. He is reproached for the patronnage he gives to the singers and musicians. Also, the *Wazir-ul-Mumalik*[3] being fond of wine and beautiful faces and coqueters, has his desires fulfilled with the help of this dear fellow [Miran]. Thus, he is very respectful to the *Wazirul-Mumalik* who in turn has bestowed on him [Miran] many kind favours. He [Miran] is a conoisseur in the art of attracting a new charming face every day with the help of his vile ways. Hence, he is held in esteem by his other companions. Miran's company and *mehfils* attract the beautiful and its lovers. A large number of alluring young lads of *kalawants* are lured to his *mehfils* which include Hindu and Muslim catamites as well.

Miran organizes a *mehfil* on the eleventh day of every month, and the dancers gather from morning [without any formal invitation]. *Naqqals* and *qawwals* entertain the people while the beautiful lads and lasses exhibit themselves without a trace of shyness.

Shamianas are fixed and colourful carpets are spread on the ground and the people of the city are invited.

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1. The Eleventh day.
2. Sadiq Quli Khan son of Jafar Ali Khan *Nizam-e-Bangal* was known by his *nome-de-plume* i.e. Miran. When Prince Ali Gauhar, in a fit of rage, marched against his father Ahmad Shah, Miran was sent to Patna where he died in this war in 1173 A.H./ 1759 A.D. The *qawwals* are very fond of singing his compositions. MU, Vol. III, p. 846 and MD, [Hyd.], pp. 30-31.
3. 'Itmad'ud-Daula.

Nobles in high offices are also present. Good looking women gather in such large numbers that the mere sight of them appeases the appetite. However, for the lecherous, this does not suffice. Spectacle and entertainment is provided free of any cost. It is difficult to arrange such *mehfils* or get a similar atmosphere even if one were to spend a large sum of money.

The illumination of lamps and candles in these *mehfils* is akin to the light in the valley of *Tur*.[4] The courtyard is full of traders selling varieties of wares and tasty eatables to the spectators. He [Miran] is very hospitable and as the gathering is spread over a large area, he sees to it that everyone is entertained. The elites occupy a seperate side which is adorned with beautiful carpets. They are courteously offered fruits and other eatables alongwith perfumes. Those desirous of wine are also provided with it. Thus he is proverbial for his hospitality and talent for organizing glittering *mehfils*. His house contains as many fairy like faces as are found in the residences of the nobles.

4. Refer p. 17.

Davazdahum-e-Rabi 'ul-Awwal [1]

On the twelth day of the month of *Rabi 'ul-Awwal* an atmosphere of splendour and celebration prevails in the *Arab Ki Serai,*[2] at a distance of 3 *croh* from *Badshahi qila,* the residence of Arabs who are getting a stipend from the royal court. About 200 Arabs gather and recite songs on the occassion of *maulud* in the mosque which stands in the centre of the *serai* alongwith a big reservoir, built by the late Mukkarram Khan.[3] *Na'ts* composed by the Arab poets in the praise of the Holy Prophet are recited all night long in mournful and rehearsing tones and have a mesmerising effect on the *sufis* as the couplet mentioned below indicates:—

> "All those [who are enthusiastic about] worshipping God, can do so even amidst the noise created by the Persian Wheel."

On all sides can be heard the voices of greetings and prayers and hymns in praise of God and the holy *Kalma.* [The participants] remain awake all night and at dawn they try to finish the reading of the Holy *Quran* and *Furqan-e-Hamid.*[4] As the inmates of the *serai* are *hafiz*

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1. The twelfth day of the month of *Rabi'ul-Awwal.* The birthday of the Holy Prophet.
2. Adjacent to and constructed at the same time as Humayun's tomb by his widow in 1565 A.D. Arab *Huffaz* [plural of *Hafiz*] settled here to pray for the peace of departed soul. "Lesser known Monuments of *Dehli* 15-16th Century", p. 12.
3. Mukarram Khan s/o Shaikh Mir Khawafi was a noble of Aurangzeb's court but due to unknown reasons he had left the court and made himself busy in turning things into gold through alchemy [*Kimya*]. ML, pp. 695-701 Vol. II.
4. Any sacred book containing the distinction between truth and falsehood and also the name of the Holy Quran.

they are well-versed in the art of *Tajwid* and provide great pleasure to the listeners and feel a sense of fulfillment in offering *namaz* here. The natives of the city, especially the pious and the devout, come to this hermitage to gain spiritual enlightenment and reap the reward of the other world. [Besides] they pander to the taste of the palate. The hospitality of the Arabs is proverbial and they welcome their guests by offering them varieties of dates, found in abundance in the *serai.* In the course of dinner different dishes are served continuously. Large cups of *qahwa* in which excess sugar has been added is served regularly, but the guests are reluctant to drink it as it causes nausea. The author had the good luck to visit the *serai* along with Saiyid Hashmat Khan Sahib[5] who had been very kind to him. A couplet mentioned below describes the atmosphere of the place:—

> "One day a guest went to the house of an Arab.
> The arab piled so much *qahwa* [that] the visitor himself
> started resembling a *qahwa* container".

The believers find an atmosphere of both discourses and gaiety while some people go there see the Arab lads, who are however neither attractive nor well dressed. For a man of taste their appearance seems like the following couplet:—

> "The seeker of truth finds the same attractive features
> in the twisting body of a camel,
> as he does in the beautiful faces of China and Chigil.[6]"

The people start their homeward journey at dawn when a soft breeze is blowing. [En route] they visit the graves of

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5. Son of Ubaid-ullah Khan who was the adopted son of Mukarram Khan. Saiyid Hashmat was appointed *Vakil* by Nizam Asaf Jah in the court on his behalf. MU, p. 698.
6. Name of a place in Central Asia.

fervour and jubilation in the city of *Dehli*, on the 12th day of the month of *Rabi 'ul-Awwal*, and the entire city is attractively lighted with candles, lamps and beautiful chandeliers. A *mehfil* of *sama* is organized [which] fills the atmosphere with ecstacy. A *majlis* is arranged in the magnificent *Diwan Khana* of Khan-e-Zaman Bahadur[7], a virtuous man. Colourful carpets are spread [in the *Diwan Khana*] with meticulous care. Its verandah has a spacious and raised platform, broad as the forehead of the wise, and pure water for drinking is available in the courtyard. A trunk is kept in the centre of this place containing the sacred belongings of the Holy Prophet. The visitors settle down [in all the four sides of the house] and recite the *salawat*.

In accordance with their rank and file the people offer their prayers on the opening of the trunk and gain blessings and achieve salvation, by visiting these benedictory articles.

People are busy till the evening performing pilgrimage and acquiring felicity. The box is closed after the evening prayer and the people go to attend the *mehfil* of *sama*. Seeing a crowd approaching, the *qawwals* and singers of repute start singing and their voices attract others [as well]. [Amongst them] the devout *sufis* attain the state of ecstacy. In every nook and corner the uproar created by the mourning of the ecstatics gains momentum and the other presentees also imitate their movements and gain felicity from it. With such a large crowd and the environment of *sama* the *mehfil* becomes uncontrollable. All the peculiar creations of God are visible to the visitors here.

verse:—

"Whatever is visible is thy [God's] manifestation, whether it is the freshness of the greenery or the purity of the flowers."

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7. Khan-e-Zaman Bahadur was the *Mir-e-Atish* in the period of Muhammad Shah. SMu, p. 159.

Kusal Pura

Kusal Singh is a *mansabdar* of 1000 [*zat* and *sawar*]. He is very wealthy and makes an exhibition of it [wealth] amongst his friends. He established a spacious and gracious *pura*[1] and populated it with dancers and whores [who are] known as *malzadis*. He gives shelter to criminals, drug addicts as well as pedlars. Inspite of [a large number] the presence of such people [residing in this colony] the *muhatsib* never dares to go there and check them. The women deck themselves in finery and position themselves at vantage points to attract the attention of men, either directly or through the pimps. An atmosphere of debauchery and lust prevails here and the people gather in the evenings and indulge themselves. Song and dance are in progress in every house. Lascivious men walk into any house unopposed and quench the thirst of their lusts with perverted deeds. In short, there is much to see in this world.

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1. Colony.

Nagal

There is a beautiful courtyard adjacent to the *serai* of Khawja Basant Asad Khani[1] where Nagal, a man of perfections lies buried. A large number of lascivious women of *Dehli*, dressed in finery and in the guise of making merry with the persons linked with them [who] are gathered [there] go on the 27th of every month to visit [the mausoleum]. This place of recreation also abounds with well dressed bachelors and visitors, who have come from outside the city with the hope of compliance [with] that group [of women].

Hemistich:—

> "[Who knows] whose hand [she] would ask for and towards [whom she would] be favourably inclined".

The peculiarity of this place [as said] is that, not even a stranger goes back disappointed.

The visitors flock in large numbers to this place of recreation whose courtyard though large, gets extremely crowded. People start their journey early [morning] and stay there till the evening. They stroll through the gardens which come in their way on their return and derive pleasure here. Necessity being the mother of invention, they find many sources of amusement. May God bestow such good luck on all friends.

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1. On a hillock in the north of the mausoleum of *Hazrat Qutbul-Aqtab* there is a grave known as the *mazar* of Khawja Asad Basant Khani. It is said that he was buried here before the mausoleum of *Hazrat Qutb-ul-Aqtab* but no further details are known about him. AS, p. 83.

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Reti Mahabat Khan [1]

In the long sandy desert [of Mahabat Khan], the details of which are lengthy, a large number of strong, young men gather to wrestle and exhibit their strength. Each one finds an opponent of his calibre and displays his enthusiastic and attractive motions, to the amusement of the spectators. The entire place is the epitome of enthusiasm. After these activities [of wrestling and other games] sweets are distributed, and the people disperse. The next day being Sunday, another schedule of wrestling is fixed on these grounds. A visit to this place has its own charm. Some beautiful women also gather here and they are a source of amusement for the visitors.

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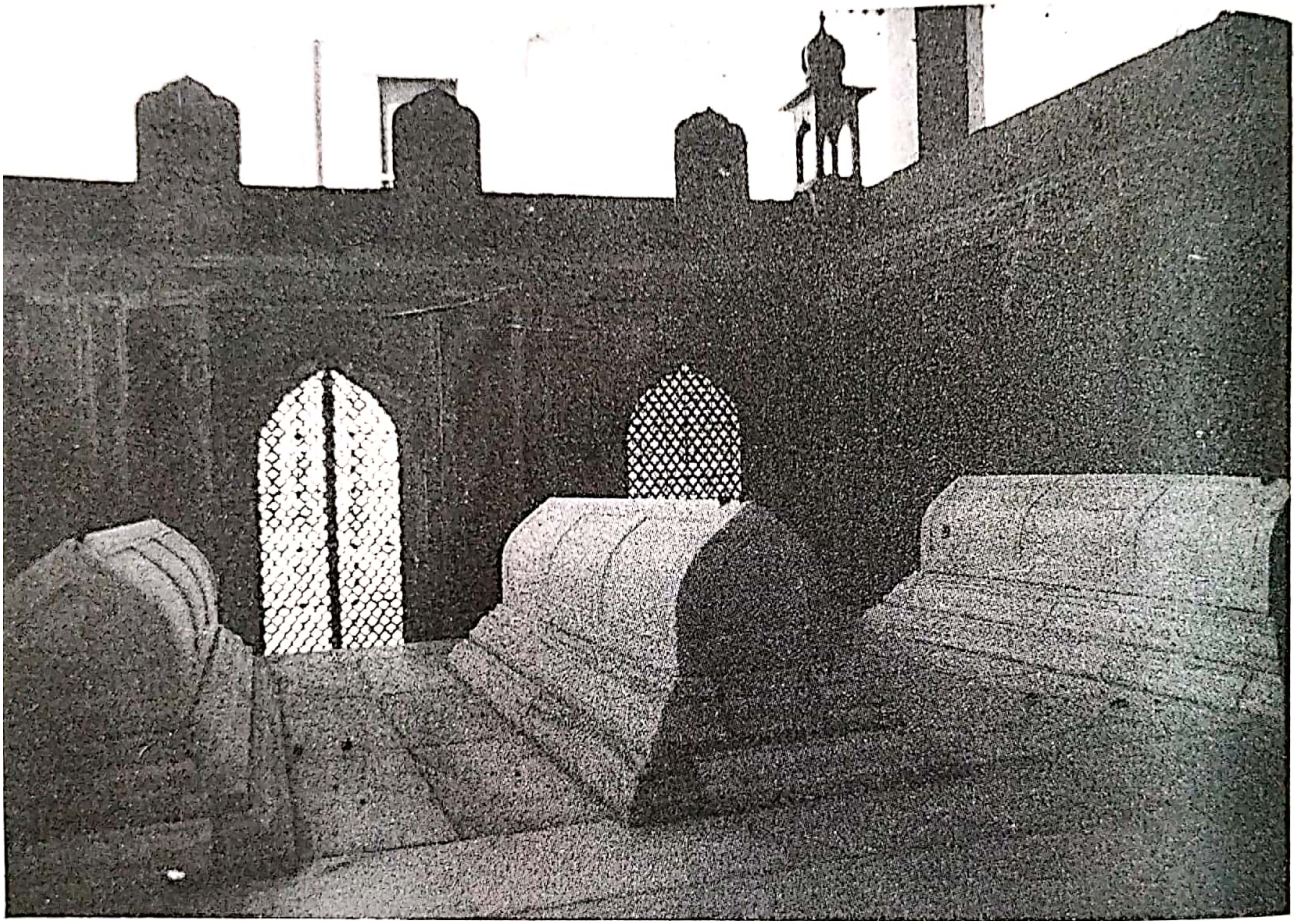
1. *Nawwab* Mahabat Khan was of *Rajput* origin. He later became a Shia Muslim. A renowned noble of Jahangir's court he died on the 14th *Jummadi-ul-Awwal* 1044 A.H./1634 A.D. The *Jamuna* used to flow by the side of his *haveli*. Hence, this place came to be known as the sandy bank of Mahabat Khan. The princes and the members of the nobility used to come here for recreation. For details see MT, p. 242 and Elliot and Downson, vol. VII, p. 45.

GRAVE OF MIRZA MAZHAR JAN-E—JANAN

Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Janan [1]

His colourful and delicate temperament does not require to be elaborated upon. The breeze is busy flowering the trees and plants, so that they could be used to decorate his praiseworthy compositions. The soil nourishes the narcissus, whose stems converted into quills will dwell upon his virtues. His poetry is worth writing on the petals and his thoughts deserve to be engraved on the pupils of a *Bulbul's* eye. The clarity of his idiomatic conversation has the fragrance of a rose and is pleasing [to the ears]. The sweetness of his poetry plucks at the strings of the listeners hearts. He renders his own verses in so capricious a manner that on hearing it the people start building castles in the air. The attractive style of [his] conversation draws the admiration of the listeners who start uttering *wah, wah*. In *mehfils*, his sweet verses act as *nuql* of *ghazak*, while his thoughts are like wine for those who understand their meaning.

On the completion of his formal education, he was greatly influenced by the love of God, for the perusal of

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1. Mirza was born in 1699 A.H. in Kala Bagh in Malwa. His father Mirza-Jan was a *mansabdar* in the Mughal court under Aurangzeb. The Emperor, according to the prevailing custom, named the child *Jan-e-Janan*. He was gifted alike with a handsome personality and an outstanding intellect. He received military training along with the conventional education in language, religion and philosophy. His father died when he was only 16 years old. Mirza did not try to obtain a *mansab* or job, throughout his life he remained engaged in the devotion of God and reform of the people. He belonged to the *Naqshbandi silsila*. He has left many poetical works in Persian and Urdu. He was assassinated by the Shias on the 10th *Muharram* 1195 A.H./1780 A.D. "Reign of Muhammad Shah", p. 348. His *mazar* is situated in the vicinity of *Dargah* Abul Khair, near Chitli qabr, Delhi.

which he gave up his worldly attachments and adopted the life of a *derveish*. A section of the populace is very keen on his company, which however, they get only if luck is on their side. It would not be a great sacrifice for a person to give up his life for the verses [of the Mirza], the recitation of which has its own charm. His piety puts him high above the cadre of the poets but since he excels in poetry, the [Mirza's] name has been included in this list [of poets].

Nobles of high rank try various ways to join his company but in vain. He is found in *Masjid-e-Jahan Numa*[2] on every Thursday and all those desirous of his felicitious audience come to see him here and are fulfilled. His residenc is in old *Dehli* but his desire to purify [his soul] and his fondness for passing his time at a different place each day, makes it difficult to derive the pleasure of his company. However, his affection for his believers takes him to their respective houses [without any prior notice], and though he extends his favours to both nobles and plebians, he is particularly attached to his disciples and enlightens them. This man [author] has many times gained felicitations from him [Mirza]. The house of this poor fellow [author] has been enlightened once by his gracious presence.

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2. This mosque was built by Shahjahan. The historical decree for *Jehad* in 1857 A.D. was released from this mosque. For details see AS, p. 161. It is presently situated near Dargah-e-Hazrat Rasul Numa, *Andh Mahavidhalaya*, Punchkuiyan Road. The *Jama Masjid* was also called *Masjid-e-Jahan Numa* WDHD, p. 103.

Mani Yab Khan [1]

He [Mani Yab Khan] is one of the chosen few of the *Badshah*[2]. His many faceted personality makes the fresh blossoms seem brighter, and his verses send sweet vapours all round, greatly affecting the listeners. He has perfect command in the art of the usage of appropriate words and his style of rendering [the verses] is mesmeric. The *Urs* of late Mirza Bedil[3] is celebrated on the third of the month of *Safar* when all the poets of *Dehli* gather at his *mazar*. The recitation of the verses of the Mirza [Bedil] from his *diwan*, placed in the centre marks the inauguration [of the *Urs*]. After this, the poets gathered there recite their own compositions and expect to be appreciated. Mani Yab Khan takes the lead in the recitation of the *ghazals*. Infact the poets consider themselves honoured at this choice. His verses touch the core of the heart and their [verses] perfection leaves no room for criticism. A *matl'a* is being written in this memoir as a token of remembrance :-

> "When your dark blue eyes roam carefree in the garden,
> the innocence of beautiful women seems dull by comparison".

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1. Gul Muhammad Mani Yab Khan, '*Sha'ir*' was the son of a *derveish* of Punjab. A legally married wife of Bahadur Shah I brought him to Delhi and adopted him as her son. Later he was married to one of her daughters. He was a disciple of Mirza Bedil and with the help of Anand Ram Mukhlis he received the title of '*Khani*'. He died young in 1157 A.H./1744 A.D. SK, pp. 243-46.
2. Muhammad Shah.
3. Ref. p. 16.

Hazeen [1]

Hazeen is a guest in the Paradise like country of *Hindustan*. His good nature and piety have adhered him well to his contemporary poets. A native of Iran, he came to *Dehli* as a mendicant with the lust of a wanderer in his heart. He is worthy of high regard and respect and his presence lends honour to a *mehfil*. He feels contended with a life of solitude and *tawakkul*. Even the men of power and means need his blessings, and feel honoured in sending him [Hazeen] goods of daily requirement. Although he leads a life of purity and charm, there is always a large crowd gathered at his house, peculiarly symmetrical in design.

In the evening the courtyard in his house is swept and sprinkled with water and colourful carpets are spread on a raised platform, and, the established poets start the recitation of *ghazals* which embellishes the *mehfil*. They benefit from his company and knowledge. He is full of wit and maturity and his renderings, along with gesticulations are attractive. His verses make the audience ecstatic and the poets are inspired to polish their own skill. Some of the best verses [of Hazeen] are being written for the readers :-

> "Akin to the flame leaping continuously from a candle, the heart burns with the desire for the beloved.
> These tears are not mere beads which I can scatter countless on the floor, but the blood of my heart oozing out of my eyes."

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1. A native of Iran, he was born in 1103 A.H./1692 A.D. He came to India during the Afghan invasions in Iran. Later he settled in Benaras where he died in 1180 A.H./1766-67 A.D. For details see "Shaikh Muhammad 'Ali Hazin", HIL, p. 308.

Sirajud-din Khan Arzoo [1]

The petals of the flowers will feel honoured if the sweet smelling compositions [of Arzoo] are written [on them] and the nightingale will relish his verses. His colourful conversation delights and refreshes the listeners at the *mehfils.* The book of his verses is very enlightening and his penertrating thoughts expressed in his *safina* leave a deep imprint on the minds of the people, while his *diwan* is treated like *Hamail*[2] by those inspired by him. He is the pride of the poets and the focal point of the epigrammatists in the *mehfils.* Both the poets as well as the members of the nobility in the capital covet his company as he can be a true and an intimate friend. His appearance in *mehfils* is as occasional as the cresent moon and when he does concede to come [in *mehfils*] voices of appreciation rent the air. It it considered fortitious when his fans get the pleasure of his company.

Sirajud-din-Khan Arzoo is one of the participants in the celebration of the *Urs* of Mirza Bedil,[3] whose pupil he was. He favours those present with a recitation of his thoughtful verses, which are welcomed. Old memories are revived in this book with the help of this verse :-

> "The hazards of intoxication go to the grave of the intoxicated,
> it would be more appropriate if a jasper were to be put on the grave in place of the tablet".

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1. Born in Gwalior, he belonged to a *sufi* family. His paternal side links his geneology with Nasirud-Din Chirag Dehlavi and his maternal family can be traced to Muhammad Ghaus of Gwalior. He migrated to Delhi in 1130 A.H./1717 A.D. and was oppointed a *mansabdar.* He has left behind three Diwans and another work of lexicography, *Majma-un-Nafais.* He died in Luckhnow in 1169 A.H./1755 A.D. GH, pp. 20-22.
2. A small *Quran Sharif* suspended...from the neck as a preservative.
3. Refer p. 116

Mirza Afzal Sabit [1]

His [Sabit] poetry enraptures the ecstatic, and provides a yardstick for other poets [to gauge the worth of their own poetry]. His lovely, interesting and inspiring verses create a tumult in the minds of the lovers. Amongst his contemprories he [Sabit] is renowned for his mature and unique thoughts, which find expression in his subtle rehtoric. The critics admire his excellence and mastery in this art as well as his spiritual attainments. He is contented with the life he leads of a *faqir* and desires no union with anyone rich in material wealth. He spends time in *tawakkul* and his firm resolve to lead the life of a *derveish* has been maintained with consistency. No worldly desires have been able to attract him. He spends most of his time in composing verses and writing books on *sufi* thoughts.

Before he left for his heavenly abode, he was compiling an anthology of *sufi* thoughts and now his disciples are trying to complete it. [Before his demise] many men of perfection used to gather around him [Sabit] and derive felicitious pleasure from his company. He has left behind a *diwan* composed according to *radif*. A *matl'a* of his *diwan* is being quoted here in order to acquaint those fond of poetry with the freshness of his poetic skill.

"Like the morning which marks the end of union and deprives me of my soul [beloved],
take my bones to the place of martyrdom of the lovers.
The way a seal leaves behind a name on the paper,
I become aware of my existence only when I am not thinking of you."

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1. He was the son of Hasan and was from the family of Islam Khan Khushi, a nobleman in the court of Shahjahan. He came to Delhi from Allahabad and expired in 1151A.H./1738A.D. MN, p. 149 and KA, p. 173.

His compositions are a source of inspiration to wisdom and his poetry, God be Praised, is also elegant. The geneological tree of his family takes his lineage to Haji Shafi Khan[1] of the reign of [Aurangzeb] Alamgir. However, unlike the Alamgir he does not tax people with money, but with the task of appreciating his poetry. His verses are akin to the flowers which decorate a garden and their words are like twinkling gems. Even in the art of extempore recitation [verses] his mastery prevails over the others. He is famous also for his witty and entertaining verses. The lack of worldly goods of daily requirements has not made him bitter, nor does it deter the men of letters from flocking to his house. He never grieves his bad luck which destroyed a number of people. [On the other hand] he is thankful for the spiritual wealth [bestowed upon him] and is always busy organizing *mehfils* and gatherings. A fascimile of his versatile poetry, which depicts his forlorn state is being used to adorn this memoir :—

"Loneliness has ruined me, let there be some
compassion for a moment,
the heart is bursting with sorrow, *Ah* ! [let there be]
some one to lend an ear to my appeal."

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1. He was a noble in the court of Aurangzeb holding the *mansab* of 1000 *zat* and 300 *sawar*. "The Mughal nobility under Aurangzeb", p. 212.

Mir Shamsun-din-Maftun

The simplicity of his thoughts inspires even the sagacious in the *mehfils*, and his frank conversation penetrates their defences. He is contended with whatever he gets and meets people only when required. He writes poetry in the classical style which should be familiar to those desirous of understatnding [his verses]. A couplet of [Maftun's] collection [has been selected] as a souvenior [for this book]:—

"Nothing can be done hurriedly in this world,
the mud was kneeded for fourty days before man
could be made."

Mirza Abdul Khaliq 'Varasta'

He [Varasta] is a wealthy noble and a *mansabdar* [in the Imperial Court], but has a temperament and the freedom of expression found in a *derveish*. He has constructed a house and its lines of symmetry and decoration and storeys are worth mentioning and beholding. The details of the house are expressed in this quatrain, composed in his elegant style:—

> "This house is decorated like the blossoms of paradise,
> and shines like the pupils of the eyes,
> behold this fountain, *hauz*, flowers as well as this
> quatrain [which illustrates the beauty of all these]."

Having affixed a large mirror in the centre of this abode he himself carved the following quatrain:—

> "This Alleppo mirror glitters,
> like the shining rays of the morning Sun,
> akin to the beloved's face [is fixed] in the heart
> and like the eyes of the lover,
> it is stuck to the wall with equal intensity."

Men of discernment name this [mansion] as a glass-house, decorated with colourful carpets and curtains of attractive colours and the niches filled with china wares. With a repertoire of euphuistic verses, the poets gather in this glass-house and indulge in lively conversation and enjoy themselves with the aid of the *qahwa*, *huqqa*, confections and perfumes. Verses from the *diwans* of old poets and the subtle compositions of contemporary poets are recited before him, and [they] appreciate his sociability and intimacy.

Varasta is greatly attatched to a *faqir* in whose company he spends much of his time. The *faqir's* presence in his house makes him ecstatic, and he holds conversations with him in private. He also recites the verses of his chosen metres to this *faqir* for the latter's opinion. One of the *matl'as* which he composed in his finer moments is being written here as a token of remembrance :—

"A rival is antagonistic towards both you [the beloved] and me [the lover],
o Beauties! why don't you get ready to kill him."

Garami

He is one of the poets of [Paradise like] *Kashmir*. Inspite of having the disposition of a *maulvi* he has the fervour of a poet. With a collection of his compositions tuked under his arm, he attends *mehfils* of the perspicacious with the belief that his *diwan* comprises his best poems. Like a typical *Kashmiri* he reads them [verses] animatedly. At times, his claim to fresh compositions which he recites over-confidently meet with arguments and a controversy starts. However, keeping in mind his advanced years, and to maintain the ethics of the *mehfil* the poets praise him with due formality and ignore it [the controversy]. One of the *matl'as* of [Garami] which the author liked very much is being quoted in commemoration:—

"Ever since thou [the beloved] started taking walks in the garden,
the flowers have lost their colour."

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1. He was the son of Ghani Beg Kashmiri *Qabul*. He composed in Persian and *Rekhta* as he found the latter more popular with the people. He died in 1156A.H./1743 A.D. SA, p. 198.

Mirza Abul Hasan 'Agah'

[Agah] is one of the friends of 'Azimullah Khan[1] and his colourful temperament has endeared him to the other poets. At the *Urs* of Mirza Bedil he is the reciter of his [Mirza Bedil's] verses. He keeps busy gathering [new] ideas for verses. A young, magnanimous and companiable man, his zeal is compared with that of his counterparts. His lively verses framed in a peculiar manner are a source of amusement. A *matl'a* which I [author] heard decorates the [this] book:—

"Ever since your pain and sorrow have become my guests,
making *kababs* grinded with salt of [my] heart and placing on the dinning table."

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1. Azimullah Khan, son of Riyat Khan *Zahir-ud-Daulah*, was the son-in-law of the *Wazir*, 'Itmatud-Daulah Qamrud-Din Khan. He was the deputy governor of Malwa for a short period. When Nadir Shah occupied Delhi he was appointed to collect fines from the people. For details see MU, vol. II, pp. 332-33, MF, p. 439, ML, vol. II, p. 921.

Halima

He [Halima] is an Arab who composes poetry in the *Ishaq Atamma's* style. In his poetical thoughts there is always a mention of *roti* and *phirni* as well as *ash* and *kabab.* His imaginative verses provide relief to the poor, who or hearing them get the taste of the food in their mouths. His poetic thoughts are commendable. He extracts good verses from the poetry of the other poets, and in this manner has an enriched collection. [Halima] has memorised about two thousand verses of different poets [Classical and Modern]. He renders them in a loud style which creates commotion at *mehfils*. A *matl'a* is being quoted from his verse as a present to the readers :—

"Like a persistent fly that sits on the *dastar khawn* of everyone,
he is sure to be found [wherever he can find access] without any formality."

About Marsiya Khwans

Mir Lutf Ali Khan[1] [Reciter of] *Diwan-e-Javed Khan*[2]

There is no indication of spiritual enlightenment from his [Mir Lutf Ali Khan] heavy and bulky body, as well as his ugly and unattractive face. However, he recites *marsiyas* and the *manqabats* with great skill and aplomb. In fact, he should be called Muhateshim[3] and honoured [as] *Maulana* Hasan Kashi[4] of his time. His renderings of the *manqabats* in *rekhta* are full of enthusiasm and the recitation of the elegies create an atmosphere of sadness and tragedy. He epitomises meloncholy and grief and his verses are full of agony and affliction. [Mir Lutf Ali Khan] is the principal organiser in the *Ashur-Khana* of Javed Khan, and is very respectful towards the pilgrims and mourners. Inspite of his unappealing face his recitations are very moving.

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1. Mir Lutf Ali Khan was a *Panjhazari Mansabdar* (5000 zat 5000 sawar) in the Court of Muhammad Shah, ML., vol. III, p. 890.
2. *Nawwab* Bahadur Javed Khan was the chief *Khawja Sera* in the court of Muhammad Shah. He was killed by *Wazirul-Mumalik* on account of his increasing familiarity and influence in the Imperial court. Mir Lutf Ali Khan used to recite the elegies and the *manqabats* from the *Diwan* of Javed Khan. SMu, pp. 457-58.
3. Muhateshim Kashani s/o *Khawja* Mir Ahmed was a renowned poet of the court of Shah Tahmasp [1524-76 A.D.] of Safavid Dynasty. He earned a lot of fame for a number of elegies he composed relating to the incident of Kerbela. The elegies from his work *Devezdeh Band* are commonly recited by other *marsiya Khwans*. Muhateshim died in 996 A.H.1587 A.D. Tarikh-e-Adabiyat-e-Iran, pp. 369-70 and Taziyah, p. 256 and Maulana Muhateshim Kashani, pp. 11-22.
4. A well-known poet who composed elegies and eulogies in favour of *Hazrat* Ali. He spent his life in Āmul and Najaf (Iran). K.A., p. 389.

Maskeen, Hazeen and Ghamin

There are three brothers in the city, popular in the art of composition and recitation of elegies. Their elegiac compositions personify both grief and sorrow. The other reciters of elegies are attracted to them in an effort to obtain their [brothers] compositions, which will enhance their prestige amongst their peers. As they [brothers] fulfill the task of affliction and love for the children[1] of *Hazrat* Ali [with their blessings], they manage to eke out a decent livelihood. They have devoted themselves to the recitation of *manqabat* and their renderings afflict the mourners so deeply that it is difficult to effect such a depth of feeling even while listening to *Rauzatus-Shohda* or *Waq'a-e-Muqbil*[2]. The readers who are well acquainted with the various stages of mourning and affliction would feel the eloquence of their works.

Couplet :—

> "We hardly know the difference between the breeze and the zephyr,
> [all we know is that] who so ever brings us the news of our beloved, takes away our heart."

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1. i.e. *Hazrat* Imam Hasan and Hussain and the members of their family.
2. Refer p. 21.

Mir Abdullah

[Mir Abdullah] is one of the mourners of *Hazrat* Abu-Abdullah-Al-Hussain [Peace be upon him]. He recites elegies composed by Hazeen[1] and Nadim[2] in such a meloncholic way that the laments and wails of the mourners reach a high pitch. His style of tender rehearsal [of the initial verse] is worthy of mention and has a soul-wrecking impact. Even an incomplete recitation of a hemistch on the verse of *mustezad*[3] creates an atmosphere of mourning and lamentation. When he starts to complete it [verse] after a lapse, the same cacophony of grief can be heard. The great musicians are unanimous in their opinion that a superior elegist with a rythmic voice such as his [Mir Abdullah] has never been heard before.

He is showered with great regards, particularly in the holy month of *Muharram*. He takes it in turn to recite the elegiac compositions in the houses of mourning of the nobles. The crowds gather much before his arrival and wait to hear him. His elegiac poems help them to gather the requitals for the other world. He is followed by a group of winsome lads, assistants and helpers, and they reside in his house except on the days of *Ashura*. Many people, including the *kalawants* and *qawwals* gather at his residence to imbibe the art of recitation of elegies. He has reached the zenith of his accomplishments and has become a braggart. Hence, he is often on the receiving end of sarcastic remarks of some people. However, he has excellent mastery over his art.

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1. Ref. p. 67.
2. Refer p. 74.
3. A kind of poetry in which verses are appended to the initial form.

Shaikh Sultan

Although he hails from the East[1], his manner of speech is similar to any person of eloquence of *Hindustan.* His recitation of elegies in a meloncholic yet sonorous voice and rehearsing style are similar to the voice on the Day of Judgement. Inspite of lack of formal training in music, his recitations rouse interest in the hearts of the people. As soon as he starts reciting the elegies, the crowds gathered are grief-stricken and start wailing and lamenting. Whichever *Ashur-Khana* he goes to his renderings create an atmosphere of grief. My God reward him well.

1. Western U.P.

His [Mir Abu Tarab] style of the recitation of elegies stuns the people to a meloncholic silence. He is well versed in the art of music and leaves a great impact on the mourners. He is respected in all the places of piety and wherever else he goes.

Mirza Ibrahim

The meloncholic sounds of his elegies melt the heart and his wailing tones bring tears in the eyes. People are mesmerised by his recitations and some go into a state of trance. His dignified bearing in the *Ashur-Khanas* and other places of mourning is worth beholding.

Mir Derweish Hussain

[Mir Derweish Hussain] is one of the mourners of *Hazrat* Imam Hussain bin *Hazrat* Ali [Peace Be Upon Him], and performs its rituals in an exemplary manner. His selected rhythms are outstanding and people are very familiar with them. They [rhythms] have never met with any adverse criticism. Mir Abdullah[1] highly applauds the talent of Mir Derwiesh and regards the latter as his successor. There is a lot of similarity in their modulations as well as their voices. His recitations are highly appreciated and acclaimed, causing a cocophony of wails. [Mir Derweish] is in the service of Javed Khan[2] and receives his patronnage.

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1. Refer p. 68.
2. Refer p. 66.

Jani Hajjam

His woebegone voice during the recitation of elegies is as piercing and sharp as the razor's edge, and his *alap* creates a tumult in the hearts of the listeners. Having heard him once they do not desire to hear him again, as the sheer force and impact of the recitation of his elegies saps their strength.

[Jani Hajjam] at the zenith of his elegance and dignity was the beloved of a nobleman and consequently accum-mulated about a lakh of rupees. Being fond of music and wine, he lost this wealth [on it]. Now, he is facing financial problems. However, his polished ways make sure that favours are bestowed on him by the nobles and that he is invited to their convival *mehfils*. He sings *khayyal* and *jangla* and lives a life of leisure.

His compositions, replete with sad words and metaphors have a mesmerising impact [on the listeners]. He is good at *tazmeen*[1] particularly with those of *musaddas*[2]-*e-Wahshi*[3]. For example :—

"Friends, hear the details of my problems.
Hear the details of my life [when I have nothing left]."

Every word of his elegiac poems wrings the heart and brings tears to the eyes. His compositions in *rekhta* are so superior that even the great poets of Persia would bow before him. While reciting the elegies, [Nadim] himself is deeply affected and this attitude extends itself to the listeners who also become crestfallen. He uses words in his poetry with efficacy.

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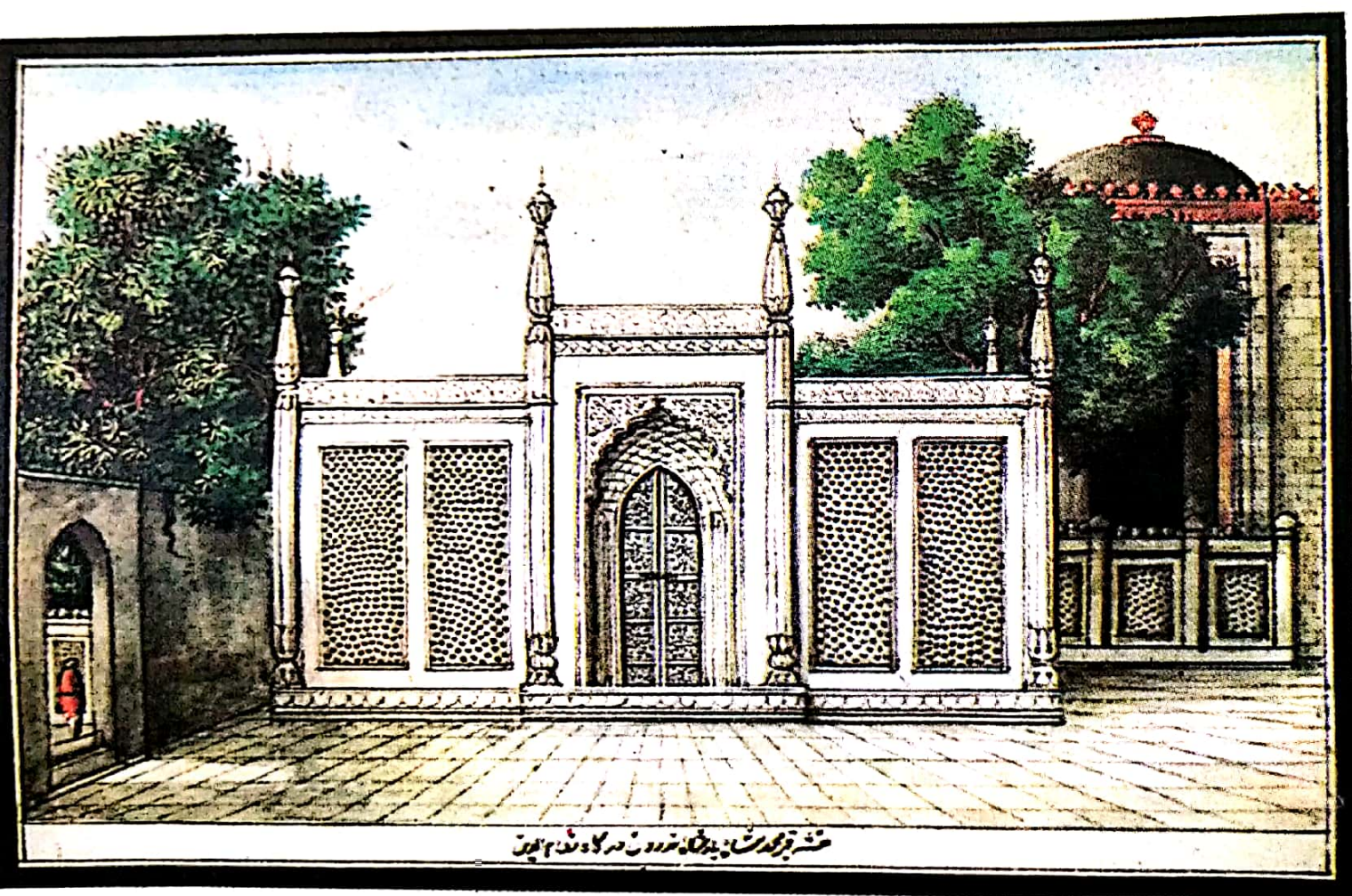
1. Inserting verses of another in one's own poetry.
2. Hexameter.
3. Wahshi of Bafaq, a town in the state of Kerman (Iran), was a a renowned poet. He died in 991 A.H./1582 A.D. Tarikh-e-Adabiyat-e-Iran, p. 373.

GRAVE OF EMPEROR MUHAMMAD SHAH

About Arbab-e-Tarab [1]

Ne'mat Khan Bin Nawaz [2]

His existence in *Hindustan* is a blessed gift. He is renowned for his compositions of new musical notes and notations and is on par with the *nayaks* of bygone days. He innovated a variety of beautiful *khayyals*. The works of [Ne'mat Khan] are in different languages and he is considered the master of all contemporary musicians of *Dehli*. His personal contentment makes him bow only before the *Badshah*. During the reign of Shah Muhammad Mui'zud-din[3] [Ne'mat Khan] was a highly honoured and respected [person]. He takes part in the ceremony of the *urs* of the saints and himself performs the celebrations of the 11th day[4]. There is a musical gathering at his residence on the 11th day of every month when a large section of the populace [including the nobles of high rank and elites] of *Dehli* gather. Since the place gets extremely crowded, people start arriving from morning to [find a decent place for themselves]. The *mehfil* lasts till the break of dawn, when it is culminated with *raag bibhas*[5].

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1. i.e. people who amuse; artists, singers, dancers musicians and mimics etc.
2. He is generally known as Sada Rang in the world of music. He was born in the period of Aurangzeb in the house of Parmol Khan [his father]. He attained fame in the period of Muhammad Shah Rangila who was himself a good musician. His innovations of new notations, particularly the variety of *Khayyals* in which he used to train the lady singers and dancers of the Imperial Court are worthy of mention. HMH, p. 554.
3. Jahandar Shah 1712-13 A.D.
4. Of the death anniversary.
5. The nature of this *raag* is calm and it is sung at dawn. MuN, pp. 220, 321.

His expertise in the art of playing the *bin* has no parallel in this world.

Verse :—
"The singer in this *mehfil* steals the heart,
however, the moment he plucks the strings of the *Tambura*, it tickles the hearts of the people."

Felicitous is that *bin* player, whose mere placing of the *bin* on the shoulder emanated harmonious soundsl and exhilarated the people. The gourd of his *bin* [sounds] is intoxicating as wine, and the touch of the finger-nails on the strings animates the people. The music of the *bin* makes the people listless with ecstacy and the sounds of appreciation rent the air. His playing of a new musical note [*raag*] elicts a similar response. It is possible that the people would not have seen and heard an exquisite player of *Bin* as Ne'mat Khan.

Couplet :—
"The entire area is inundated with water,
and I wish to inform all those fond of drinking that,
they should bring their goblets with them."

His brother has also mastered the art of playing different musical instruments. For four hours a day, he recites the musical notes in different notations and his skill and stamina enable him to avoid repitition of the same *raags*. The quality of his talent is quite uncommon and his singing is charismatic. Such skilled expertise is not bestowed on every one.

A nephew of Ne'mat Khan[1] is skilled in playing the *sitar* and composes new notations. He also plays notations on the *sitar* usually played on other instruments. In the world [of music] he is incomparable. The author

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1. He was Ada Rang who innovated various new notations to be played on the *sitar*.

[of this book] has attended his musical gatherings many times and regards him with respect. Endowed as he is with this unique talent, his *mehfils* are popular, and carry on all night. Inspite of the instability [caused by the invasion of Nadir Shah] the spirit of revellry is extant [and continues] till pre-dawn darkness. He still accepts the invitations to offer entertainment.

Taj Khan

[Taj Khan] is a *qawwal* whose subtlety in his art has earned him a permanent place in the hearts of the listeners. More captivating than the voice of the *bulbul* and delicate than the petals of the flowers, his verses move the people to ecstacy and they shower him with more requests. Like to the paintings of Behzad his voice creates pleasing images while retaining the beauty of the verse when changing the emphasis on words of a stanza. Nothing distracts the listeners, and they remain captivated by its [verse] magic. It has been noticed several times that he does not take drinks and eatable at *mehfils*. He has a retiring and meloncholic temperament, hence, his voice often breaks in the course of the song.

A *mehfil* is arranged at his residence on the 7th day of every month. Amongst those present are renowned mendicants and saints who regard *sama* with reverence. The *qawwals* present on this occasion take it turn to sing, but, [according to the author] Taj Khan remains the favourite of all. His son, Jani and Ghulam Rasul are the spiritual heirs of their father and possess a similar temperament. Their likeness is evident in their singing and both provide a lot of entertainment in *mehfils*. [If] one finds time for their company he would receive great pleasure.

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1. Ustad Kalim-Ullah Behzad, the famous painter of Iran, 1450-60 A.D. Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. I, p. 1221.

Baqir Tamburchi

The strings of the *tambura* [of Baqir] strike at the chords of the heart, the moment he begins to play. The meloncholic sound of his instrument fills the listener with compassion [while] he himself is also mesmerized. The gourd of his *tambura* is like a cup of wine, while the neck of the instrument is more attractive then the stem of a goblet. His music and gestures are well received and sounds of appreciation fill the air. A peg of his *tambura* is made more welcome than a solitary hermit or a religious personality. His musical melodies seem a part of Dawud's modulations[1]. Attached to the Imperial court, he commands respect amongst his contemprories and friends.

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1. *Hazrat* Dawud [biblical David] father of *Hazrat* Suleiman, [Solomon] was endowed with a melodious voice whose magical quality attracted not only the humans but the animals and inanimate objects as well. Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 182.

Hasan Khan Rebabi [1]

His stature is bent like the arched *chang*[2] and the dawn of his old age has begun. His body has emaciated to the thinness of a *rebab* chord. He is constantly worried for a stable source of income. The poor man is caught in the clutches of poverty. May God hear his prayers. His name figures in the list of well-known players of *rebab*, particularly amongst the *Dehliwalas.*[3]

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1. A persian musical instrument also used in India.
2. Another persian musical instrument also used in India.
3. People of Delhi.

Ghulam Muhammad Sarangi Nawaz

The harmonious music from his instrument [the *sarangi* of Ghulam Muhammad] has a lot of appeal for the audience and the stoutest of the hearts melt before his meloncholic voice. The sounds emanating from the bow on the strings of the *sarangi* are like arrows piercing the heart, and the listeners rejoice at the touch of his finger nails [on the strings of the instrument]. The music he plays to rehearse is also of high quality, and elicts the respect of the people. He is incomparable in his mastery over the art. He [shows a marked] preferance for the company of saints and lives a frugal existance. [However] his art has gained him [recognition and] respect and [he] is found in the company of all sections of people.

[They] are the descendents of Tan Sen.[1] Their ancestory can be witnessed in their talent, [and they are] highly admired by the other singers. Their melodious voices create a tumult in the *mehfils* of Venus[2], and the power of their sweet songs seems to be carried high by the wind. Their recitations are so harmonious and balanced that their voices do not distort [even during the modulations in high and low pitches]. Also, their loud voices do not impair the notations. They are unique in the art of [recitation of] *kabbit*. [Tan Sen] is a master in the singing of *Dhruvapad*.[3] His style of *alap* is like the slow advance of spring. However, returning to the basic note [it] is like a rocking boat in an overflowing river.

Once, during monsoon a *mehfil* was arranged one day, of conoisseurs like Tan Sen, Hussain Khan *dholak nawaz*, Hasan Khan *rebabi*, and Ghasi Ram *pakhawji*. Their vocal and instrumental music over-powered the thunder of the clouds, and seemed to pierce the ceiling of the building they were in. It will not be easy for the people to forget the impact this *mehfil* had on them.

Hemistch :—

"Lord, remembrance of those days
when entertainment was free."

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1. The renowned musician and one of the nine jewels of Akbar's court.
2. According to Greek mythology, Venus is the name of a star regarded as the goddess of music.
3. Vedic musical style as mentioned in the *Samved*. Although only religious singing was legitimate in this style,, later, it was mixed with the other *raags* and used for all purposes. It became very popular in the 17th century. According to the author of "*Raag Darpan*" it is orated from the chest while the *khayyal* is sung from throat. p., 39.

Qasim Ali

[Qasim Ali] is one of the [bright and talented] disciples of Ne'mat Khan. The zest with which he is heard is a proof of his apptitude. The audience feel favoured when he sings *kabbit* [particularly in the classical style]. In the *mehfils* of the royal court, he is shown a marked preferance by His Majesty and is highly respected by the nobles. His youthful voice and mastery over his singing have made him a rage and gained for him both recognition and popularity. His songs leave a deep impression on the hearts of the listeners. The author has heard him once and would like to do so again, but there are obstacles [preventing him].

M'uin-ud-Din qawwal

He is one of the contemporary and eminent master *qawwals* and has outshone the others in the art of *qawwali.* Like the varities of flowers in the valley of Kashmir [M'uin-ud-Din] modulates his melodies an equal number of times. With great imagination he sings *qawwalis* without break, which, like the paintings of Behzad are captivating. His attractive voice charms even the most beautiful deers [away] from themselves. He has command over the different pitches of his voice and often experiments with the extremes [high and low pitches] which [the audience] find appealing. In short, to those familiar with music, God has not bestowed such an able singer [as M'uin-ud-Din].

The ingenuity with which he uses his voice has made Burhani a force to reckon with in the world of music. The maturity and perfection of his singing makes the people persuade others to hear him. His skill and bearing are a proof of his advanced age. [Burhani] is on familiar terms with Shah Kamal,[1] a *sufi*. A *mehfil* is organised every Tuesday when the *sufis* gather to experience a state of ecstacy.

The author once attended one of these *mehfils*. The deafening and unrythmic voice of Chalbal Dhadi[2] sent shudders down the spine of those present, except the *sufis*, who on reaching the state of ecstacy, became immune to the noise.

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1. Refer p. 35.
2. According to the author of *M'adan-ul-Mousiqi* the category of the musicians of medieval period is as follows :—
   1. *Gandharva* 2. *Gunkar* 3. *Kalawant* 4. *Qawwal* 5. *Dhari* or *Dhadi* 6. *Pandit.*, "Hindustani Music", p. 152.

Burhani[1]—*Amir Khani*[2]

There is harmony in his modulations and his voice is medium pitched. His style of singing is in accordance with the taste of Amir Khan. He recites verses with great ostentation and the people are desirous to hear him.

1. Burhan Khan *qawwal*, in the service of Amir Khani *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani*, folio no. 62.
2. He was a noble in the court of Muhammad Shah. His lineage links him with the Safvid Dynasty [1501 A.D.—1757 A.D.] of Iran. The title of *Umdat-ul-Mulk* was bestowed on him by the Emperor. He wrote poetry under the pseudonym of *Anjam* and also composed a *Diwan*. He was fond of *mehfils* of song and dance and had a sound knowledge of music. He was assasinated for his disloyality, inside the royal fort. GH, pp. 13-14, Tazkira Sho'ri-e-Urdu, p. 9, MT, p. 869 and Diwan-e-Taban, pp. 272-73. Mir Abdul Hai *Taban* was a renowned poet of this period and associated with the court of Amir Khan. He composed a *mathnawi* in the praise of Amir Khan and a *marsiya* at the latter's death the date of which can be derieved from its last line i.e. 1169 A.H./1755 A.D.

Rahim Khan Jahani

[Rahim Khan] is in the service of Amir Khan[1]. He sings *khayyal* with elan, applying different musical notations. He is worthy of being heard.

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1. See Burhani Amir Khani.

Shuja't Khan

[Shuja't Khan] is a descendant of the noted *kalawants* of the Royal Court. He lays claim to mastery in *kabitt*, although his style does not endear [him much] to his audience. He wears a stylish turban topped with a jewel. His *khol* filled eyes do not seem attractive to us. However, we are no judges of beauty.

Ibrahim Khan Kalawant

[The author] had a chance of hearing him [Ibrahim Khan] in one of the *mehfils*. However, he did not derive enough pleasure to wish to hear him [Ibrahim Khan] again. Although akin to Mir[1], he is honoured by the people of *Hindustan*.

1. A lesser known poet of Deccan of the early 18th century.

Savad Khan known as Kole and Savade

They were popular personalities of *Dehli* but are now as redundant as old *Dehli*.[1] The people who are now of advanced age were very fond of their *mehfils* and they [Kole and Savade] are respected amongst their contem-prories. However, the present young generation is obli-vious of their perfections.

1. *Purana Qila.*

Bole Khan Kalawant

[Bole Khan] is in the service of the *Badshah*[1] and holds a position of repute and confidence amongst the imperial supervisors. He has an antiquated style of singing.

1. Muhammad Shah Rangila.

Ghasi Ram Pakhawaji

He has an inexpressible proficiency in his art [of playing the *pakhawaj*]. The striking of his fingers on the instrument is subtle and soft as the pulse of the ailing. If his fingers were to play on an instrument made of petals of a flower instead of leather, the same delicate rhythm will emanate. The movements of his fingers are smooth like the sagacious thoughts of the wise.

[Hussain Khan] is one of the inimitable prodigies amongst his contemporaries [in his skill of playing the *dholak*]. He has taken this art to its peak. Whatever lies beyond this is still only in the realm of imagination. The *Hindustanis* opine that a better player of *dholak* is yet to make his mark in *Dehli.* He proudly claims in *mehfils* that his repertoire of *raags* on the *dholak* would not exhaust even if he were to play continiously for six months. The people present confirmed his statement. It is true that he has supreme command over his skills. It would be better if the sun and moon were fixed on either side of the *dholak* instead of leather, and his magical fingers were decorated with precious jewels. When he switches a *gat*[1] unintentionaly, yet subtly, the listeners remain unaware of it, unless and until they lend their ears to it with complete concentration. At this stage appreciative exclaims can be heard.

Tehna is one of his pupils considered to be his [Hussain Khan's] real successor. He plays the *mandal* with mastery and has no rival in *Dehli.* Hence, he is eonsidered a fascimile of his master [although] he does not excel him [Hussain Khan].

1. Strike of the fingers on the *dholak* is termed as *gat.*

Shahbaz Dhamdhami Nawaz

His father is in the service of Azam Khan[1] and plays the same [*dhamdhami*] instrument. Nowadays in *Dehli* there is no one to match him. He plays the instrument with such finesse, that it is difficult to play likewise on the *dholak* or the *pakhawaj*. The audience immediately follow his notations. Earlier, the nobles did not give due recognition to his skill, but changed their opinion after a few days in his company.

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1. Ref. p. 38.

Shah Nawaz Sabuche Nawaz

[Shah Nawaz] is blind from birth, [but] his dexterity in playing the *sabucha* unnerves even the conoisseurs of *dholak* and *pakhawaj*, and mesmerises the listeners. When the wealthy people organise *mehfils* they send a conveyance to fetch him. He has invented an instrument which is an amalgam of some of those already in existence. The sounds of the *dholak*, *pakhawaj* and the *tambura* can be produced from it. His lack of outer vision is [more than] compensated by his deep insight.

There is an another blind musician who uses his belly to create sounds of the *dholak* and the *pakhawaj*, and plays melodious notations. He has invented new rythms and is an effective accompaniment to the women dancers. Constant striking has turned his belly as black as his luck.

Taqi

[Taqi] is one of the famous eunuchs and the ringleader of the conjurors of *Hindustan*. He is a favourite of the *Badshah* and has access to the private apartments of His Majesty. The nobles and the *Amirs* accord him a courteous welcome and are keen to be invited to his *mehfils*. He possesses weapons and dresses of all kinds, and the traditional objects of every tribe and nation which aid him in conjuring tricks. Like the colourful blooms of *rehan* growing on a flower bed, the pederasts and the winsome lads can be seen gathered in the conjuror's house. The pedlars and the young boys contribute their share by attracting people with their tricks and mannerisms. His [Taqi's] house is the abode of delicate beauties, some as fair as dawn while others are as dark as volatile passion. There delicacy makes the petals envious, while their ringlets are as complex as the *sumbal*.[2] The tall curvaceous bodies weave webs in the hearts of the beholders and a mere look of their doe like eyes freshens them [beholdes]. The winsome lads are also suseptible to beautiful faces and bloom like flowers when their desires are fulfilled. The others who abound Taqi's residence are catamites, eunuchs and effimanates who are proud to be known as his disciples. Thus, his cotorie includes all kinds of people as well as pimps.

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1. Muhammad Shah Rangila.
2. Hyacinth.

Shah Daniyal known as Surkhi

He is endowed with a voice as melodious as a nightangale's and is familiar with different languages. He provides a *nadim*[1] like companionship in the *mehfils* and demonstrates his talents of mimickry and witticisms. His constant practice and presence in the company of the musicians has made him an expert in singing *kabbit* and *khayyal*. Thus, he is the recipient of reverence from the masters in this trade. He lives the life of a mendicant and claims that his ancestors were saints. As a consequence, he is respected by the people as well. His style of singing is mature and he has a large collection of songs. In fact his talent is worthy of being displayed in *mehfils* of mature and well known people. His renderings in classical style enamour and mesmerise the *sufis*. His repertoire of music comprises samples from all over the world. Singing provides him with a livelihood.

[Shah Daniyal] has access to *mehfils* of the wealthy and is often found in their service. Their *mehfils* always feature him, as his eloquence and patience have earned him a prominent place. He makes it a point to attend gatherings where he is sure of being benefitted and provided with a variety of dishes. Being a glutton, he eats heavy and long drawn out meals in a manner which repels those with cleaner habits. Thereafter, he is inclined to smoking a *huqqah*. He snores, and expectorates loudly while performing his morning ablutions. His hosts overlook his disgusting habits and tolerate him as he livens up the *mehfils* with his talents and ready charm.

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1. Boon companion.

Khawasi and Anutha [1]

They are the well known *naqqals* of *Dehli* and are employed at the Imperial Court. The showmanship with which they present their programmes of mime are incomparable. They also have a talent for dancing and singing *khayyal*. The fun of the riotous *mehfils* increases when the dancing girls are also present. In this atmosphere of revellry they [Khawasi and Anutha] often give their best performances and receive appreciations and applause.

Sabza and Meza are two novices in this group. The mannerisms and gestures of these charming and pretty lads exhilarate those present, and some desire to retain these lads for themselves. [Similes] There is more pleasure in their long and curly tresses than in the blessing of a long life. Their *khol* filled eyes are longer than the extent of a man's vision.

Their tall statures and their style of conversation are very attractive.

Verse :-

"Whenever I raise my eyes I behold a sight,
may God grant me time to enjoy these feasts."

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1. Their names exist in the list of *Bhands* in *Tarikh-e-Shakir Khani*, folio 63.

MIMICS

Bari Naqqal[1]

A description of her beauty requires a *qalam* made from the feathers of a parrot. The perfume of the odourferous herbs is not as strong as the scent of her qualities. To express the beauty of her olive complexion the pen should be dipped in verdigris instead of black ink.

Verse :-

"I was unaware that the beauty of her olive
complexion would be my death,
for it is a cage in which I am caught."

Her graceful beauty cannot be perceived unblinkingly as each feature requires attention. Her swaying is akin to the stalks stirring in the spring breeze. Her coquetry is like a beautiful *khayyal* out of reach of the poets comprehension. Whosoever finds himself close to her is bewitched and is desirous of spending his whole life in her embrace. Her olive complexion puts to shade the freshness of the spring and the beauty of the flowers.

Couplet :-

"A glimpse of her beauty or her melodious voice,
just one is enough to rob the heart,
however, a combination of both plays havoc
in the lives of the lovers."

Her group comprises beautiful people well versed in the art of mimickry. Two, three novices [of her group] are coming into the limelight. May the envious sky grant us the opportunity to steal a look on them.

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1. He was one of the *Bhagats* in the court of Muhammad Shah. *Tarikh-e-Shakir Khani*, folio 63.

The Beloved[1] *of Abul Hasan Khan son of Sharif Khan*

She is endowed with a graceful disposition and a colourful temperament. The listeners are obliged with her soft and dignified style of conversation. Her smile reminds of a bloom of spring. She makes fruitful use of proverbs of colloquial language and her renderings leave an impact on the hearer. Her talents in the field of singing and dance also evoke praise.

Once, unawares she landed at the residence of Mian Muhammad Mah[2], pardon be upon him. All those who watched her performance found it difficult to forget her. Her presence lent a charm to the *mehfil*, the memory of which still draws sighs from those present. She sang beautifully a *kabbit* and a *khayyal* in *Sortha raag*[3] which would not stale even on repeated hearings. She had descended like lightening in that *mehfil* which cannot be reiterated.

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1. The name of the girl is not mentioned in any source.
2. Nephew of Muhammad Akram *Ghanimat*, he hailed from Kunjaha in Punjab. He was very good at composing lyrical poems, which he wrote under the pseudonym of *Sadaqat*. He died young in 1148 A.H./1735 A.D. *Safina-e-Khushgo*, pp. 198-201.
3. It is sung in the second part of the night. For detalls see MUN, p. 187.

Jatta qawwal

[Jatta] is a prominent [*qawwal*] in the *mehfils* of the *sufis* and ascetics and they derieve pleasure from his presence. He recites Quranic texts in a meloncholic voice which expound on the unity of being and causes the *sufis* to suffer [from unrequited love] in the state of ecstacy. He is well versed with the sayings of the *mashaikh* of former times. In fact, their compilation would form a book on mysticism. His memory retains so many verses, that with its help a voluminous selection of the best verses of the *sufi* poets can be prepared. The sounds of his instruments and song enrapture the heart for ecstacy is an inseperable element of his singing. He elicits praise from the *mashaikh* and is dear to the mendicants as well.

In the *Khanqah* of Shah Basit[1], a nephew of Samsam-ud-Daula who regards himself a *faqir*, a special *mehfil* is organised every Sunday. It is a conglomeration of *faqirs*, singers, *sufis* and charming people. An atmosphere of ecstacy is created and this house becomes the abode of beautiful faces. Jatta is always present in these *mehfils* as he is one of the organisers and in the service of Shah Basit. In this blessed *mehfil* the poetical compositions of the Shah are sung by him in the style of *qawwali*. Shah Basit himself is very good in composing *qawwalis*. It is easier to feel the unique character of these *mehfils* of ecstacy rather than describe them.

Hemistch :-

"Even the pen felt powerless to go beyond his verses".

---

1. His ancestors came from *Mawara-un-Nahar*. He was born in Akbarabad and migrated to Delhi. Basit was the nephew of Samsam-ud-Daula Khand Rewan Khan Bahadur. At the behest of *Nawwab* Shuja'-ud-Daula he went to Lucknow and stayed there till he breathed his last. *Safina-e-Hindi*, p. 37.

Rahim Khan, Daulat Khan, Gyan Khan and Haddu

They attribute the perfection of their art of singing to the ancestory from Kolha and Savada[1] whose popularity is difficult to describe in words. All the four brothers are nonpareil in the singing of *khayyal*. They sing with such delicacy and exaltation that the heart desires to hear them repeatedly. The recognition of the brothers, especially the fascinating and lovely gestures of Daulat Khan arouse the attention of a lot of people.

A *mehfil* is organised at the house of Daulat Khan on the twentyfifth of every month, where conoisseurs in the art of *qawwali* and singing are present. The artists seek the recognition of their talent from them [brothers]. Thereafter, the brothers take it in turn to recite. People wait impatiently to hear Daulat Khan, whose soft voice makes it difficult for the people to decipher the words of his verses, unless they are endowed with a strong sense of hearing. However, seeing the people sitting close to him applaud the rest also join in although it is difficult to hear the recitations.

Rahim Khan has attained maturity in his art through constant practice. Both his personal simplicity and his style of singing endear him to the hearts of the people. Nobles are keen to absorb him in their service. In a state of drunken stupor the brothers behave obnoxiously but the people ignore it. Like the *khol* filled intoxicated eyes of the beloved they are inebriated with wine all day long.

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1. Refer p. 90.

The younger brothers, Gyan Khan and Haddu perform to the best of their ability and receive the remnants of a wearied applause from the people. In this *mehfil* are present the best talents of *Dehli* and a highly appreciative audience, out to derive maximum pleasure.

Asa Pura

[Asa Pura] belongs to [the group of] Ramjani and is both popular and respected in musical gatherings and amongst the singers and poets. She has perfect command over her renderings of *kabbit* in the style of the old school of the *kalawants*. Even the high and the low pitches of her voice are akin to the conoisseurs in this art. She is an authentic singer and well known for it. [Asa Pura] is past the bloom of youth and hence is sought not by the lovers but by people who have a passion for music. She is covetous of honour and respect and duly receives both.

Khushali Ram Jani

[Khushali Ram Jani] is in the service of I'tmad-ud-Daula[1] and a lot of dignity and grandeur are associated with her bearing. Once, she was dancing in a *mehfil* attended by high personages to whom she gave no particular importance. Content in her demonstration, she neither addressed nor attended anyone. She sings well and her gestures are graceful and attractive.

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1. Refer Appendix A.

Behnai-Feel Sawar [1]

[Behnai] is a well known dancer and is the head of the other dancing girls. She has mace bearers as servants. Her relations with the nobles is one on equal footing and she writes letters of introduction, which they welcome. Earlier, she was on very familiar terms with I'tmad-ud-Daula[2] who visited her often at her residence. He once brought for her a gift of a flagon and goblets studded with jewels, and worth seventy thousand rupees. The extent of her wealth can be imagined.

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1. Elephant-rider.
2. Refer Appendix A.

Ad Begum

[Ad Begum] is one of the most popular and famous women of *Dehli* and she decorates her legs with beautiful *naqqashi* in the style of *pyjamas* instead of actually wearing them. In place of cuffs [*poinche*] of the *pyjamas* she makcs flowers and petals in ink as found in the *Kam Khab*[1] cloth of Rume[2], and then attends the *mehfils* of the nobles. However, the lack of *pyjamas* is discernible only if someone discloses the information. Because of the uniqueness and unfamiliarity of this peculiar style the people are full of praise for it.

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1 & 2. A quality of coarse cloth woven in Rume, a city in Turkey.

Chamani

A well known personality of *Dehli*, [Chamani] has access to the *Badshah*[1]. Confident of her talent, she competes with great musicians and is honoured. Access to her is ensured only after she has been showered with gifts. She enhances the eloquence of her conversations with the use of appropriate idioms, and she is an excellent company to be with. Having crossed the threshold of youth her maturity attracts only those who are fond of singing. The *Badshah* also enjoys her company occasionally.

Her singing is intoxicating and rekindles the dormant desires. In the singing of *tarana* her tongue moves sharper than the scissors. Her mastery is acknowledged by her contemporaries. She is a worthy woman, skillful and learned and kind to those who know her. The author once attended a *mehfil* at her house which lasted till dawn.

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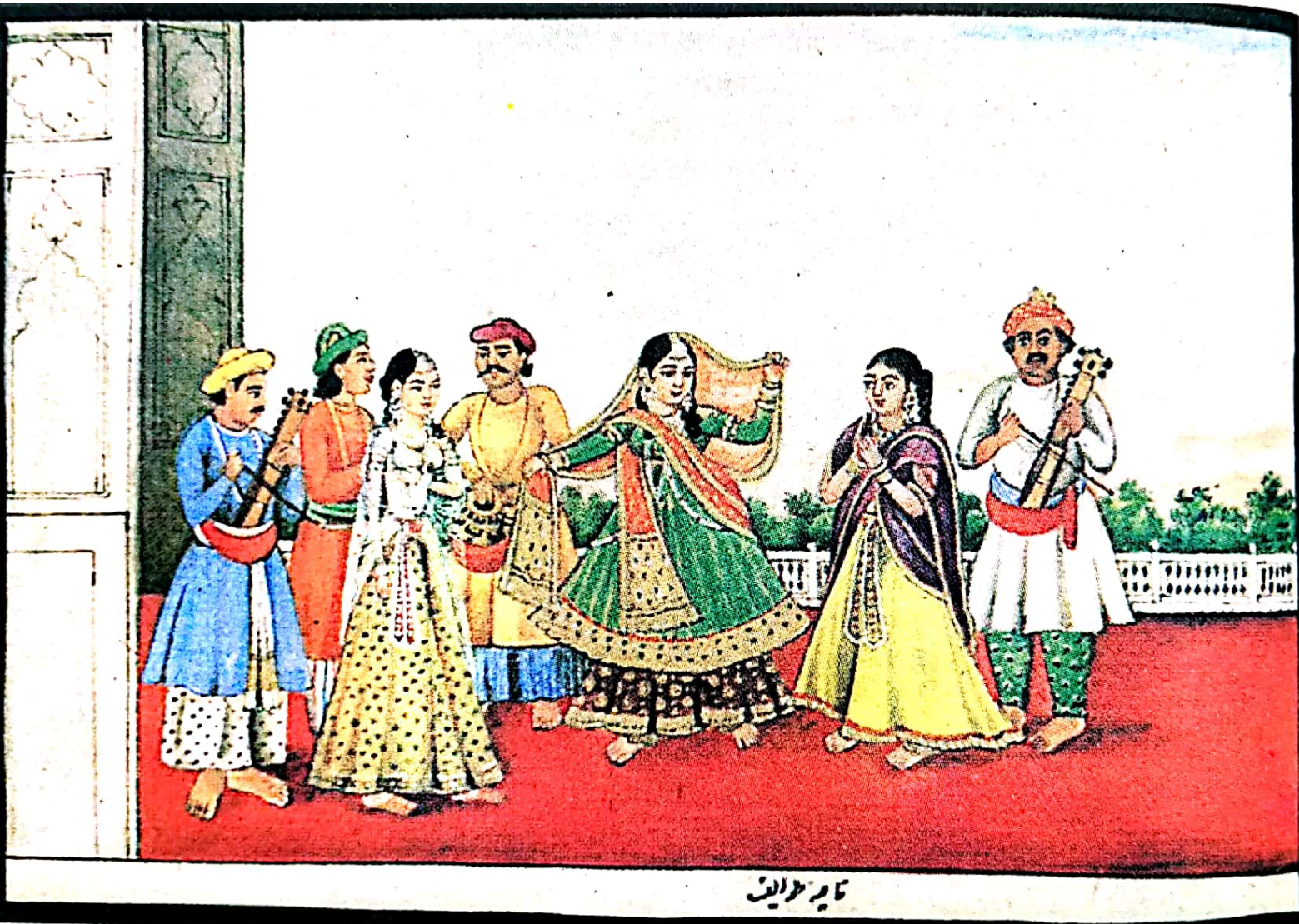
1. Muhammed Shah.

DANCING GIRLS

Saras Roop[1]

At the sight of her alluring, coquettish actions the eyes widen and the heart is filled with desires. Her singing is like a breath of fresh air for the weary soul and the aroma of her verses spreads far and wide. She has become popular and is highly admired for her dancing and singing. She elicits praise from both the elites and the *sufis*. The radiance of her beauty surprises the vision of the beholder. The pleasure of her company can be attained only after prior permission, sought with attractive gifts. May God fulfill the wishes of all those who desire her.

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1. She was living with Ali Quli Khan, a noble of high rank. *Tarikh-e-Shakir Khani*, folio 62.

Nur Bai [1]

[Nur Bai] is a *Domni*[2] of *Dehli*. [Even] the nobles [have to] make a request to visit her residence while a few [nobles] go to her house. She lives in a grandiose house, full of curios usually associated with the houses of the nobles of high rank. The pageantry which moves with her when she goes out, comprises all the paraphernalia of a procession of an *Amir*, like beadle and herald. Her mode of conveyance is usually an elephant. The invitees have to send a large sum of money to have her acceptance [of their invitation] and on her arrival, has to be showered with jewels as a token of *runumai*.[3] A similar custom has to be observed at the time of her departure.

Whosoever gets enamoured [of her] gets sucked into the whirlpool of her demands and brings ruin to his house. A section of the people have become paupers after their

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1. The heart of Nadir Shah was conquered by a dancing girl of *Dehli* named Nur Bai. Nadir Shah was so highly fascinated by her music that he paid her Rs. 4500 and wanted to take her to Persia with him. Nur Bai apparently did not relish the idea of leaving India for the King. It was with difficulty that she could save herself from his favours. PI, p. 81. According to the author of QH she recited a *ghazal* in the form of a polite refusal. QH, p. 193.
2. A class of dancing girls who sing in *Hindustani* and whose songs are considered more beautiful, more amorous and more profound than those of the persian dancing girls, while their tunes are also superior. They dance too, to the rythm of the songs with a kind of swaying of the body which is not lascivious but rather modest. Jahangir's India, p. 83. *Domnis* are recorded in Crook's Tribes and Castes of the N.W. Provinces as a sub-caste under the group *tawaif*. PI, p. 81.
3. i.e. *mooh-dhekhai*, a present made to a bride when she unveils herself.

association with her. The pleasure of her company can only be had as long as one is in the possession of riches to bestow on her. Nur Bai has a colourful personality and is dignified of bearing. She has a sharp mind and is a good and subtle orator. Her colloquial language is full of idioms and proverbs which she uses with ease and finesse.

If such a companion [as Nur Bai] is to be found, all the desires would be fulfilled. No price is prodigious to have her for an intimate friend. She is very particular of the manners and customs to be observed in *mehfils*, and even those well-versed and well practiced can learn more from her. The tutors of ethics and morals can take a lesson by observing her hospitality towards the presentees of the *mehfils*. The exponents of music have a deep regard for her. She organises *mehfils* with the help of a few female accompanists who are addressed as *Begum* or *Khanum* and recites *jangla*, a style popular in *Dehli* nowa-days. She tries to advance their position in this world by writing for them letters of introduction for favours, to the nobles. They [nobles] also welcome these recommendations. However, her beauty is superior to her talent.

Once the author also had the good fortune of spending some time in her company.

Sultana is a twelve year old, olive complexioned catamite, whose coquettry reflects itself in his dancing. Having gained some knowledge of music he bewitches the people. Considering his age, not much can be expected from him, still, he is a bud who competes with flowers [i.e. experts in this field], or the flame of the lamp facing the light of the sun. The audience wish to hear him repeatedly and their thirst for a vision of his beauty is not easily quenched.

Once a *mehfil* was organised by the superior of the author. All kinds of entertainments were provided, and the entire night was spent in revellry. When the desires of those present are rekindled they sigh at the memory of the *mehfil*. Durgahi, a rattler was an accompanist with Sultana and has got over the phase of ganymede. As much was not known about his disposition, enquiry revealed that he is matchless in the art of rattling. Although his outer appearence belied the fact that he could dance, he was nevertheless made to go through the exercise. He amazed everyone with his performance and they stared wide-eyed at his intricate foot work. During the performance, there would sometimes be the sound of one rattle, sometimes two and at times all. His perfect mastery over the art was evident to all and unmindful of the conduct of the *mehfil* applauded him with abandon.

There is a player of *moor chang* in this group who is incomparable as well. Putting a blade of grass in his mouth he sang as sweetly as a *bulbul* in different notes and notations. While watching his display it seems that one is going through the famous book *Mantiqut-Tair*[1].

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1. Refer p. 23.

Allah Bande and Raji[1]

[Allah Bande] is a young catamite with an attractive body. When he comes out dressed at night he looks very charming. His father was one of the famous *qawwals* of *Dehli.* Allah Bande's renderings in *khayyal* are done with full concentration. Many people are particularly favourable towards him and they consummate their desires with his co-operation.

Raji is another dark complexioned ganymede whose thin voice is incomparable even with the [sound of the] thinnest cord of a musical instrument. Those unaware find it difficult to distinguish between the sound of his voice and that of the instrument. These days in *Dehli,* the *khayyuls* of Sada Rang[2] are in vogue. [Raji] sings them in his attractive style.

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1. According to MD edited by Prof. N.H. Ansari, Allah Bande is mentioned only in the text of the said book published from Hyderabad and not in the original manuscript, p. 99.
2. Refer p. 75.

Mian Hinga

[Mian Hinga] is a fair complexioned youth and in his white dress looks fresh as the jasmine flower. He holds an assembly outside the walls of the Imperial Fort. He fixes his programmes in accordance with the tastes of the audience present. Many renowned people go for walks to the *chowk* and under the pretence of buying rare objects, watch him perform. However, the riders gathered around him are quite unpretentious in their admiration of this unique phenomenon created by God. In this show, are unaccountable groups of wealthy people, troops and others, standing or sitting. He attracts the attention of even those who come to purchase things of daily requirements. His coquetry compels them to spend the money in their pockets on him and they return empty handed, having lost both time and money.

He is the cause of many a ruined home. The colour of his dress goes well with his complexion. He looks as fresh as dawn dipped in dew. His displays carry on till sunset. Having deprieved the people of their money he returns home. Inspite of many invitations he never visits anyone at their residence. His fans have to visit his house if they wish to derive pleasure from his acts.

Chak-Mak Dahni

In the prime of her youth she was the cynosure of all eyes, including the *Badshah*[1], who was fascinated by her and bestowed upon her the title of *Chak-Mak*. However, she now stands on the threshold of old age, hence, there is a marked decline in her fame. Still, her meloncholic voice has an attraction and her stylish renderings mesmerise the mendicants. [At the height of her fame] those desirous for her used to shower gold coins at her feet and made special requests before she acquiescened to spend a night in their company. Even now her company can be enjoyed after gifts have been showered on her and it is difficult to seek her intimacy without lavishing adulations upon her.

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1. Muhammad Shah.

Kali Ganga

[Kali Ganga] is a dancer of renown and well respected. Her dark complexioned presence is like a beauty spot on the faces of fair charmers or like the black eyes of a doe. Her demeanor is dignified and she speaks with care. Her rythmic and poised walk as she enters a *mehfil*, makes the hearts of the people restless. She sings like a conoisseur and her dancing is akin to elegant walking. Her charmful personality befits her beauty, and she commands adulation, which the people shower on her ungrudgingly.

Zeenat [*Behji*]

Her well shaped figure and coquetry help increase the lust of the people. Her melodious voice moves the people who are deeply touched by it. Like the beauty of her face her renderings of *raags* and *surs* are charming. She is desired by all those endowed with a subtlety and delicacy of temperament. Although her dancing is like stylised walking, it has its own appeal. [Zeenat] is a woman of pride and popular, for she is not stingy with her favours. Her nights are spent in the company of scheming fellows and her days with some local wits or jocunds. She gives consent to the people desirous to avail her company. She remains busy entertaining the people that it would be better if she concealed herself somewhere, for her innumerable engagements have rendered her hard pressed for time. It would have been better had she been someone else. Infact, her residence is like a beehive, always full of lecherous fellows. She has a nomadic temperament, [thus] one finds joy in her embraces.

Verse :-

> "She was passed from one person to another like
> a goblet of wine,
> and was carried from shoulder to shoulder
> like an earthenware pot."

Gulab[1]

Like her name, the perfume of her singing penetrates the hearts of the people while her gestures intoxicate them. Her eloquence and understanding of minute subtleties and ready wit make her an admirable company to be with. She is sagacious as well as perspicacious in poetry. Being a singer of merit, she elicits praise and respect from the lovers of music.

Couplet :-

"By which beautiful women should we be charmed,
this entire world is like a palace of mirrors,
reflecting their beauty."

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1. Rose.

Ramzani

[Even] a thought of her beauty rejoices the heart as the dawn of the *'Id-e-Ramzan.* Besides, she is popular for her singing and draws large crowds at *mehfils*, who appreciate her gestures and subtle words. Her increasing age is an obstacle to attracting more paramours for the nights. Thus the lust remains unquenched, but her mature years have given her a self-control, by virtue of which only formalities have remained in her associations.

Rehman Bai

[Rehman Bai] is one of the offsprings of *dhadis.* Her dark complexioned beauty is likened by the conoisseurs to the beautiful dark portraits. The impact of her voice is sharp as a surgical instrument. She is versatile in her art and well known for it amongst her friends. Her *khol* filled eyes are a source of inspiration. Her appearance reminds one of a picturesque evening of Kashmir and her black complexion, as dark as the *Aab-e-Hayat*, refreshes the soul. Her walk and graceful and coquettish gestures help surface the desires of the people. She is cautious of being embraced in *mehfils* and steers clear of demonstrative people. It is said that she is still a virgin.

Verse :-

> "She is the creation of neither Ma'ni[1] nor Behzad,[2]
> but has taken form from the pen of God."

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1. Born in 215 A.D. in Iran and executed in 276 A.D. He was the founder of religion—Manichaeism. For details; Encyclopaedia Britannica, vol. 14, pp. 801-804.
2. Refer p. 78.

Panna Bai [1]

[Panna Bai] is one of the chosen disciples of Ne'mat Khan[2] and sings *ghazal* in the similar style. Her virtues and other qualities of merit deserve special mention. Her voice brings the freshness of the garden to the room and soothes the distraught hearts of those seperated from their lovers. The stability of her high pitch flashes like the rays of the sun in the sky. It is not easy to decipher the subtlety of her words and by the time the meaning can be grasped she has moved on to other verses. Her eloquent oratory and melodious voice are akin to the mature thoughts of the wise and the geomancers. Her selective usage of words can only be followed by the learned and her conversation is more appealing than the coquetry of other women. Liberally sprinkled with wit and humour and accompanied with attractive gesticulations, her presentations have made her a rage of the city. Having heard and enjoyed her company once, the people are bereft of the desire to hear anyone else. [Panna Bai] is respected for her art and she creates a pleasurable atmosphere whichever place she graces with her presence.

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1. Ne'mat Khan taught Panna Bai the renderings of *khayyal* and *ghazals* to be presented in the royal court. *Sada Rang*, p. 24.
2. Refer p. 75.

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2. Refer p. 75.

Kamal Bai [1]

Like her name [Kamal] she has mastered through constant practice the art of singing and dancing to perfection. At one time her retinue adorned the *mehfils* at the Imperial Court. However, since the invasion of Nadir Shah, His Majesty *Din Panah*[2] abstains himself from the musical soirees and has suspended them at the court. Consequently, her company which had previously been forbidden, is now accessible. Her recitation is in the style of female *kalawants*. Her meloncholic voice is so melodious that it enraptures the hearts of the people.

She usually recites the *khayyals* of Ne'mat Khan[3] which are dedicated to His Majesty[4] and provides entertainment and pleasure to her favourites. Her constant practice has made her so thorough that she can sing like a nightangale, all night long and still retain the freshness of voice. [Kamal Bai] is well versed with the mannerisms of the *mehfils*. Her dignified demeanour and ribaldry have endeared her to the people who find her company enchanting.

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1. Perfection.
2. Muhammad Shah.
3. Refer p. 75.
4. Muhammad Shah.

Uma Bai

Her soothing gestures recreate the freshness of the breeze of spring while her harmonious and unique modulations are as odourferous as *Rehan*[1]. Her uncanny extempores are as pert as the wit of Asir[2] and her mimicry provides the same pleasure as *nuql* with wine. She is coveted for her attractive stature and coquetry. Like the thoughts of Naziri[3] her expertise in the recitation of *kabbit* and *khayyal* is nonpareil. [Uma Bai] is also endowed with a sensual yet faithful temperament.

Nauras Kunwar is the rising star in the cortege of Uma Bai. Her long shapely stature is the envy of the eucalyptus. She is the beloved of Mian Muhammad Mah[4], the leader of the jocunds. He organises *mehfils* at his residence which attract large numbers, for they are highly entertaining.

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1. Flower, white Basil.
2. Jalal Asir of Isphan, died 1639 A.D., poet and scn-in-law of Shah Abbas I of Iran. HIL, p. 326.
3. Naziri of Nishapur, a renowned Persian poet of Akbar's period, died in Ahmedabad in 1021 A.H./1612 A.D. HIL, p. 723.
4. Refer p. 100.

Earlier[1] she [Panna] was the primary dancer of the Imperial Court. Her alluring beauty and graceful disposition provided immense pleasure to the *Badshah*[2] who showered her with generous favours. Now she organises the musical gatherings for her admirers and delights her fans. Even before she begins to sing, her dancing elicits great admiration and applause. Her peculiar style of using the colloquial dialect, full of proverbs, idioms and swear words in her recitations bewitch the audience. [Panna] sings *khayyal* with eloquent delicacy and her renderings of *raag* enrapture the people. Those who desire to hear her sing different musical notes are never contented. The vile guise of her beauty weaves a web in which the hearts of the men get entangled.

She [Tanu] fascinates people with her beauty and addresses them with her sweet sentences and phrases. Her gestures and mannerisms are difficult to put in words while the pen tires of elaborating on her attributes and blandishments.

Mian Muhammad Mah[3], a nobleman with colourful temperament is highly enamoured of Tanu and tells stories of his affections and intimacies [with her]. These however turn sour the pleasureable moments [of the listeners].

Verse :-

"We have left [her presence] but our desires have not left us,

---

1. Before the invasion of Nadir Shah.
2. Muhammad Shah.
3. Refer p. 100,

they [desires] are mirrored on our face."

Let there be talk of union even if does not take place. A crescent moon is favourable if there is no sun, similarly a mention of it is better even if there is no revelry.

Appendix A

Shah Muhammad Amir[1]

[Shah Muhammad] belongs to the *Naqshbandi silsila* and hails from Sirhind. His renowance for his good deeds and perfections needs no explanation and his attainment of the praiseworthy *wilayat* cannot be put in words. He spends most of his time furthering his spiritual attainments and can be found in a constant state of ecstacy. [Shah Muhammad] has siesta and that is the only time he sleeps. Sticking firmly to the routine of dawn and night he has divided the hours [of day and night] in groups. Some of these are spent in prayer and worship while others in recital and [other such] occupations. No one has observed a break in this routine of meditation.

With the passing of the first part of the night he moves into the house where he teaches his disciples in consonance with the sayings of the Prophet. After a short rest he comes out again to offer the prayer of *Tahjjud* and stays in a state of quietitude till the break of dawn. His holy forehead shines with enlightenment. His pious presence is the axis of return for the natives of Turan and a place of circumambulation and the threshold of attainment for the *Kashmiris*. *I'tmad-ud-Daula*[2] and other nobles count

---

1. His name exists in the list of saints in *Tarikh-e-Shakir Khani*, folio 60.
2. His real name was Mir Muhammad Fazil and was the son of *I'tmad-ud-Daula* Muhammad Amir Khan Bahadur. The title of Qamar-ud-Din Khan was bestowed upon him during the reign of Emperor Farrukh Siyar. He became the *Wazlr-ul-Mumalik* after *Nizam-ul-Mulk* Asaf Jah. He was killed in Lahore in the war against Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1161 A.H./1761 A.D. For details see MU, pp. 358-361.

themselves amongst his followers. Our *Hazrat Nawwab Sahib*[3] has passed a good time in his pious presence, and obtained the benedictions from his felicitious company. [Shah Muhammad] expired during this period and his son became his successor. May God be kind and merciful.

---

3. *Nizam-ul-Mulk* Asaf Jah.

Glossary

Aab-e-Hayat : Nectar. The water of [eternal] life which is supposed to be druuk by [the ever living] Prophet Khizr.

Ash : Soup, porridge

'Ashura : The 10th day of the month of *Muharram*. The day of martyrdom of *Imam* Husain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad and the son of *Hazrat* 'Ali, the fourth caliph. On this ocassion the Muslims perform mourning. The *shias* mourn by taking out *Tazias*, beating their chests and whipping etc. in the manner of hurting themselves. The *sunnis* observe a voluntary fast on this day.

'Ashur Khana : Mourning houses where the *marsiya khawns* [the chanters of elegies] narrate the lives, deeds, sufferings and deaths of martyrs.

Badshah/ Padshah : King.

Begum : A lady of rank—feminine of *Beg* [Lord].

Croh : A unit of distance—1 : 2 miles.

Dargah : Threshold and also used for a royal court. In India this term is associated with the Muhammadan shrines or tombs of renowned holy beings; the object of pilgrimage and adoration.

Derviesh : One who goes from door to door, generally used for Muslim religious mendicants.

Dastarkhwan : A long table cloth, spread on the floor.

Diwan : A collection of poems in the alphabetical order of the letter which vary and rhyme at the end.

Diwan Khana : A Hall of common audience.

Gazak : A kind of crisp sweet meat relish.

Ghazal : An ode; the celebrated lyrical form of Persian and Urdu poetry.

Hafiz : Lit. "A guard and also one who memorises the Holy *Quran*; Nom de plume of the most renowned poet of Persia.

Hazrat : Presence; an epithet commonly used with the names of deities, Kings and holy men as a token of respect.

Hindustan : Pertaining to Northern India, as was used by the people of Deccan in the 18th century and earlier.

Huqqah : Hubble bubble.

'Id : Festival, *'Id-ul-Fitr* (festivities at the end of the month of fasts i.e. The *Ramazan*) and *'Idu'z-zuha'* (festival of animal sacrifice).

Jangla : A Persian *raag* originally known as *Zangula*.

Julu Khana : Forecourt, barbican.

Kabab : Pieces of grilled minced meat.

Kabbit : A type of metre in classical Hindi poetry. Its recitation was commonly practiced since the prevalance of *Bhakti* Movement in Northern India.

Kalma or Kalima : The creed of the Muslims "*La Ilaha illa-Ilahu Muhammadun Rasulu 'llah*". (There is no deity but God and Muhammad is the Apostle of God). The recital of *Kalima* is the first of the five tenets as practiced by Muslims all over the world.

Khanqah : Monastary or a spacious building which provides accommodation to the inmates and the *sufis* and to the visitors especially on the

occasion of festivities. It played a pivotal role in the expansion of sufism and its multidimensional propogation.

Khanum : Word used to address ladies of respect. Feminine of Khan.

Khayal : It was the most popular form of singing and occupied a unique place in the contemporary *Hindustani* musical system. *Sultan* Hussain Sharqi of Jaunpur is stated to be the innovator of this style.

Khichri : Rice, lentil and water (sometimes vegetables are also added) cooked together.

Majalis : Convival meetings, plural of *majlis*.

Muktubat : Letters, plural of *maktub*.

Malfuzat : Religious sermons or discourses of the saints recorded by their disciples.

Maulud : Birth : particularly the celebrations at the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad.

Manqabat	: Eulogy in praise of Holy Prophet and His companians.
Mansabdar	: Holder of an office rank in the bureaucracy of thc Mughal Government.
Marqad	: Sleeping or resting place (after death) i.e. grave.
Marsiya	: Elegy, pronouncing a funeral eulogium. This is generally recited in commemoration of *Imam* Hasan and *Imam* Hussain during the month of *Muharram*.
Marsiya Khwan	: The reciter of *marsiya*.
Mashaikh	: Saints, plural of *shaikh*.
Matla'	: Initiatory verse of a poem.
Maulavi	: A doctor of Muhammadan law or a judge of religious affairs. A term used also for a Muhammadan monk and a learned man.
Mazar	: A place of visitation, a shrine.
Mehfil	: A meeting, generally used for musical gatherings.
Mahalla	: Locality.
Muhatsib	: The Superintendent of Police who examines weights, measures and provisions, and prevents gambling, drinking etc.

Naqqal : Mimics.

Nuql : Anything given as eatables along with wine such as fruits, snacks, sweet meats or confections of nuts.

Peshgah/Pishgah : Portico, vestibule.

Phirni/firni : A sweet dish prepared with rice and milk.

Qahwa : Coffee.

Qasida : Eulogy.

Qit'a : A form of Arabic, Persian and Urdu poetry in which the first line does not rhyme with the second but with the following ones.

Qawwal : Cantor; lit, a reciter of "*Qaul*", the hymns i.e. *qawwali*.

Qawwali : The popular musical form, sung by a *qawwal*. It is stated that Amir Khusrau was the innovator of this popular style. Usually it is sung in the gatherings of *sufis* intended to produce a state of ecstacy.

Qibla : The direction to the *Ka'ba* towards which people direct their prayers.

Radif : The last word which rhyme according to the prosody of Persian and Urdu poetics.

Rauza : Garden.

Rauza-e-Rizvan : The garden of Paradise. A blessing of benediction.

Rind : One whose exterior is liable to censure, but who at heart is sound.

Roti : Unleavened bread.

Ruba'i : Quatrain.

Safina : A ship, vessel; an epithet for a collection of poems.

Sama : Ecstacy among the *sufis* occasioned by hearing songs or music. Sometimes they perform a dance in this state.

Sarai : *Caravan Serai* or an inn.

Sharbat : Squash : soft drinks made with herbs.

Subhanallah : An Arabic phrase, to express appreciation Lit. God be praised.

Sufi : A mystic. There are a number of *sufi* orders in India, the prominent of which are the *Chishtiya*, *Naqshbandiya*, *Suharvardiya and Shattari* etc.

Tahajjud : The *namaz* (prayer) offered between midnight and before dawn.

Tajwid : The style in which the Holy *Quran* is recited.

Tamasha Khana : An amphitheater, a place of amusement.

Tawakkul : Resignation to the Divine will. It is one of the five stages in the *sufic* journey (*suluk*) to attain unification with God.

Urs : Marriage, but a term used for the ceremonies observed at the death anniversary of any celebrated saint or *murshid*. The common belief amongst the *sufis* is that it is the moment of communion of the *sufi* with God.

Wah Wah : Applauds, hurrah.

Wilayat : Mystical union with God effected by self denial.

Wali : A favourite of God, or a perfect *sufi* who during his spiritual progress crossed to a stage of understanding in the relationship between the Divine signs and different attributes, finally reaching the essence of being. Thus, he is the repository of the theophany of Divine names and attributes.

Zam-Zam or Aab-e-Zamzam : Water of the sacred well within the precints of the mosque at Makkah.

Zikr : Praise or glorification of God, the recital of His names as well the recitation of the *Quran*. However, in *sufi* terminology it is a spiritual exercise designed to expel everything which separates the earthly individual from the Divine.

Ziyarat : Pilgrimage, a visit particularly to the tomb of the Prophet or the shrine of any martyr or a saint.

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MALL ROAD
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UNIVERSITY OF DELHI
CIVIL LINES
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(3) MAZAR OF MIRZA MAZHAR JAN-E-JANAN
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KATRA NEEL
TOWN HALL
FOUNTAIN
ROYAL
CHANDNI CHOWK
LAHAURI GATE
FORT
EIDGAH ROAD
FATEH PURI MASJID
QUTB ROAD
LALKUAN BAZAAR
NAI SARAK
DARIBA
JAMA MASJID
QADAM SHARIF
SHRADHANAND MARG
CHAWRI BAZAAR
BADSHAHI DARWAZA (DELHI GATE)
RAM NAGAR
AJMERI GATE
HAUZQAZI
PAHARGANJ
ANDH MAHAVIDYALA
SITARAM BAZAAR
BAZAAR CHITLI QABR
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KHAIR ABUL MARG
MINTO ROAD
PUNCHKUIAN ROAD
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DELHI GATE

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LODI ROAD
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NIZAM UDDIN WEST
SAFDAR JUNG'S TOMB
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ALIGANJ
LODI COLONY
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DEFENCE COLONY
LAJPAT NAGAR
KIDWAI NAGAR
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AIIMS
NDSE II
AUROBINDO MARG
YUSUF SERAI
GREATER KAILASH I
GREEN PARK
HAUZ KHAS
SADIQ NAGAR
PANCHSHEEL ENCLAVE
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MEHRAULI ROAD
JAHANPANAH
MALVIYA NAGAR
GREATER KAILASH III II
ADCHINI
Adam Khan's Tomb
QUTB COMPLEX

Chander Shekhar is a Lecturer in the Department of Persian, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Delhi. He is presently engaged in doing his doctoral research on Amir Khusrau.

Shama Mitra Chenoy is a Research Scholar in the Department of History, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Delhi, and a Fellow of Indian Council of Historical Research. She is currently working on Shahjahanabad for her Ph.D. thesis.